

From Preservation to Access:

A Fellowship Program to Develop the Next Generation of Dance Archivists

A White Paper by Dance Heritage Coalition

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Executive Summary

“From Preservation to Access: Dance Heritage Coalition Fellowships for Master’s Candidates,” a program developed and administered by Dance Heritage Coalition, demonstrated a successful model for jointly addressing two key needs of the cultural heritage field: the need for more subject-specialist archivists and librarians in the field of dance and the performing arts, and the need for significant “hidden” collections of dance materials to be made accessible through processing and digitization. The three-year program, generously funded by the Institute for Museum and Library Services, provided job training and mentorship to 22 students or recent graduates of accredited library science programs, helping them gain skills and experience working with multi-format dance collections. The program not only benefited emerging professionals but advanced dance studies, since Fellows performed work that increased preservation and access for significant research materials.

The success of the program can be measured in a number of key outcomes:

- A cohort of dance-specialist librarians who have remained connected and used their skills to continue serving the field. The Fellows have a 100% employment rate as information professionals, and have independently undertaken many projects to advance dance archives;
- New materials made accessible for dance research, including significant historical collections and legacies of active contemporary dance groups, as well as new web resources for dance research;
- A replicable model combining mentorship by senior professionals, experience in major research institutions, independent work with artists and cultural heritage organizations, and opportunities for training, networking, and professional development;
- Increased awareness about the field of dance archives both among library science students and among artists who benefit from partnerships with archivists; new documentation of best practices for archiving dance, including manuals, guides, and assessments.

Findings from the program suggest next steps that should be taken to sustain and increase the impact of future Fellowship programs:

- A program that assigns Fellows to work jointly with active artist donors and the repositories that want to acquire their collections would expedite the process of safeguarding and creating access to cultural heritage materials, benefiting artists, repositories, and Fellows who gain training and experience in the innovative “Processing at Accession” workflow model;
- A program that provides training and experience in audiovisual preservation would assist cultural heritage organizations in saving at-risk moving image and audio collections by increasing the number of professionals skilled in managing AV digitization projects;
- “Community Archivist” Fellowships that assign junior archives professionals to work with a cohort of artists or arts organizations within a regional community would address the urgent need to provide archival assistance to under-resourced arts communities and enable archivists to gain experience working with creators of collections;
- All Fellowship models can be strengthened by adding more opportunities for Fellows to engage in training and mentoring the next round of Fellows, and offering outreach or workshops to the arts and cultural heritage communities.

The impact of this program will ultimately be felt beyond the specific populations that it served directly—archives students, artists, dance scholars and institutional repositories. The development of an engaged, passionate, and well-trained next generation of professionals in the dance heritage field will create more vital arts ecosystems and cultural heritage organizations, increasing the number of Americans who benefit from access to the arts, a crucial lens for understanding the world and connecting to communities.

Project Background:

Identifying Needs and Designing Solutions

Dance Heritage Coalition is a national alliance of institutions holding significant collections of materials documenting the history of dance. Its mission is to preserve, make accessible, enhance and augment the materials that document the artistic accomplishments in dance of the past, present, and future. DHC pursues its mission through collaborative projects among dance communities, library and archival fields, scholarly institutions, and individuals.

In order to strengthen the field of dance heritage, DHC seeks to increase the number of subject-specialist archivists and librarians in dance. (There are no American Library Association-accredited dance librarianship programs such as there are for music, science, law and other disciplines. Though some schools may offer at various times individual courses on performing arts librarianship, there is no focus on training librarians in this field.) Since 2001, DHC has awarded fellowships to students interested in dance history and preservation to gain experience processing dance materials at a DHC member organization and apply that knowledge to another dance library, archive or dance company. A full list of all DHC Fellows and the projects they worked on is available on DHC's website.¹ For the first ten years of the program, DHC generally awarded one or two Fellowships per year. The Fellows were first assigned to one of DHC's member archives, where they received hands-on training by skilled professionals and one-on-one mentoring by senior staff while working on challenging projects; they were then assigned to assist an artist or small arts organization, where they would work independently and gain experience applying their skills outside of an institutional archives repository.

The demonstrated strength of this model supported the vision of "From Preservation to Access," which expanded the program to cohorts of seven or eight Fellows per year simultaneously completing 13-week Fellowships, with the advantages of peer networking and professional development activities such as attending and presenting at conferences, blogging, and job-search assistance. As well, the expansion of the program exponentially increased the amount of dance research materials made accessible through the Fellows' efforts.

In 2009, DHC initiated an online survey to measure the need for access to dance materials against all the other needs in the field of dance heritage.² The study confirmed that access to materials – both the content itself and the digital tools to locate and retrieve it – was at the top of most lists. Vast stores of historically and culturally valuable material on dance (books, correspondence, manuscripts, choreography notations, photographs, audio recordings, moving images, and performance artifacts) remain hidden or difficult to

¹ <http://www.danceheritage.org/previous.html>

² Dance Heritage Coalition National Dance Heritage Leadership Forum, Results of Field Survey, October 2009. <http://www.danceheritage.org/fieldsurveyreport.pdf>

access because they have not been fully processed or described, have not been digitized, are on obsolete audiovisual formats, and/or because they are held by dance companies and have not been organized, preserved, or described in any public catalog or search tool. The volume of dance material is constantly increasing and existing materials are often in danger of deterioration and irretrievable loss. This situation is a major impediment to scholarly inquiry, teaching at all levels, public appreciation, and creative work of dance makers.

Program Design:

Active Learning and Opportunities for Professional Growth

The Fellowship program was designed to provide opportunities for participatory, hands-on learning, for mentorship and networking, and for independent work in settings of responsibility.

Orientation. Fellows convened for an orientation week at the start of their Fellowships, consisting of an intensive series of workshops, site visits, tours, and collaborative projects. Orientation was held in Washington, DC, in 2012, hosted by Dance Heritage Coalition, and in Chicago in 2013 and 2014, hosted by the Newberry Library. Fellows visited the Library of Congress, Howard University Archives, the Chicago Film Archives, and Natya Dance Theatre, among others, and benefited from talks and workshops by professional archivists, audiovisual preservationists, and arts administrators. Orientation-week workshops and site visits specifically addressed topics and provided opportunities unavailable in most academic library science programs, such as archival consulting for artists, dealing with copyright and intellectual property in the arts, grant-writing and project management, and issues specific to processing multi-media dance collections.

As part of orientation, each year Fellows made a site visit to a dance company and collaboratively produced an archive assessment that described the scope, condition, and use of legacy holdings and set priorities for organizing and preserving the collection. The assessments were created using protocol developed by DHC for professional archive assessments of dance companies. (Assessments were created for Step Afrika in 2012, Thodos Dance Chicago in 2013, and Billy Siegenfeld/Jump Rhythm Jazz Project in 2014.) The orientation gave all Fellows an opportunity to meet and form strong relationships with the members of their cohort, and they were encouraged to remain in touch and view each other as resources and potential collaborators throughout the Fellowship period and afterwards, via a DHC-sponsored private LinkedIn page. Fellows found the experience of collaborating together on the archive assessment especially valuable in getting to know one another's interests and skills, and in forging strong professional and personal bonds. In addition, over the course of the three-year program connections were encouraged between earlier and later cohorts, and DHC created opportunities for previous Fellows to meet the later cohorts and provide mentorship. Since the start of the program, Fellows have collaborated on conference presentations and projects to serve the dance field.

Host Archive. Following the orientation, Fellows spent 6 weeks at one of the DHC's member archives, where they worked on projects with supervision and mentorship from professional archivists or librarians; these projects could involve processing, appraising, or preparing collections for digitization, investigating rights issues, or working on design and development of web resources. (Examples of projects are included below in the Case Studies section.) In addition to taking responsibility for these projects, Fellows had opportunities to shadow professionals, attend high-level staff meetings, and develop an understanding of

institutional structures and workflows. Several Fellows were invited to contribute blog postings on their projects to institutional blogs of Library of Congress and Harvard Libraries.

Practicum. For the final six weeks, each Fellow was assigned to a practicum at an arts organization or smaller collection; the goal of these practicums was to place the Fellows in situations where they would work autonomously (with minimal supervision by DHC staff) and apply their skills to aid collections that were usually without the benefit of trained archival staff. Fellows produced assessments and inventories, wrote guides for digital asset management, performed curation of audiovisual materials, developed databases, and contributed to designing and evaluating web resources.

Professional Development. The Fellows reconvened as a cohort to attend the Society of American Archivists annual conference; some Fellows also received support to attend a second conference of a professional association, such as the American Library Association, Dance Critics Association, or SIBMAS. Fellows maintained blogs throughout their Fellowships in which they wrote about their experiences and projects.

Selection. In awarding Fellowships, DHC made special efforts to ensure geographic and ethnic diversity and to give added weight to applications from students whose locations or master's programs gave them fewer opportunities for hands-on experience with dance or performing arts collections. Whenever possible, Fellows were placed with host archives in parts of the country where they had not lived or worked; for practicums, DHC made best efforts to place Fellows in the location of their choice.

2014 Fellow Ellen LeClere commented, "The Fellows in my cohort have all had vastly different experiences at their host sites and practicums. We've stayed in touch throughout the summer and talked about our work, and used each other as resources for solving problems in our host archives. Some Fellows have been working on digitization projects, while others have been building online platforms for collections. I definitely believe that our diversity in projects / career paths will be beneficial to each other later in life."

Successful Features

"From Preservation to Access" successfully met five goals that motivated the project design.

1. Increasing the number of Master's Degree librarians who specialize in dance and have high levels of professional skill.

Merely by its existence, this program raised awareness of dance-specialist archives positions. A number of applicants to the program noted in their letters of interest that prior to seeing the Fellowship posting, they had not considered the possibility of combining their passions for dance and archives, and were thrilled to learn about opportunities in the field. The successful Fellows candidates brought a wealth of skills and experience in both dance and archives, and their Fellowships enabled them to hone these skills as well as gain new expertise and experience. A number of successful candidates were or had been practicing dancers, dance teachers, or choreographers, while others demonstrated interest in dance history, performance, and cultural heritage. The Fellows' interests spanned a broad spectrum of dance forms, from ballet and modern dance to hula, American Indian dance, Cambodian dance, folklore, circus, and

burlesque. Similarly, Fellows brought a wide array of interests and skills in the archives field, with some strongly focused on digital technology, others keenly interested in metadata and taxonomies, intellectual property, collections policy, or archival ethics.

Candidates were required to demonstrate a strong commitment to pursuing employment in dance archives, and the fact that all of the Fellows have found full-time employment as information professionals and a majority have remained involved in the dance heritage field, whether through their primary job or through consulting, volunteering, or other professional activities demonstrates that the program successfully identified individuals who would benefit from the opportunity and give back to the field. The scarcity of dance-specific jobs in archives means that a majority of Fellows have taken jobs not primarily focused on dance materials, but several have been able to focus on identifying dance collections within their institutions, bringing to light hidden dance research materials. (For instance, 2012 Fellow Maureen Maryanski has blogged about dance collections at the New-York Historical Society.³) Through their self-motivated professional activities (founding a dance history reading group for archivists, offering workshops on personal archiving at a women's arts center and dance studio, creating a linked data taxonomy for dance costumes, presenting and publishing on their work through professional associations) the Fellows continue to raise awareness about the importance of dance archives both within and outside institutional settings.

2. Creating a networking mechanism, virtual and real, that will support dance librarians in the future.

Fellows have remained connected to DHC and to one another through social media (private groups on LinkedIn and Facebook), through DHC communications (news announcements, follow-up surveys), and informally through their own personal communications. Fellows have collaborated on dance-related projects and conference presentations, and have shared job postings with their cohorts through DHC. Particularly valuable have been interactions in which former DHC Fellows mentored members of succeeding cohorts or shared their experiences with students who subsequently applied for Fellowships. Opportunities for such interactions were created through travel support for former Fellows to attend conferences and meet with current cohorts, and through assistance by previous-year Fellows in interviewing potential Fellows and contributing to orientation week activities, as well as through Fellows' own collegial activities.

3. Through processing, preservation, digitization, and management, making more dance materials accessible to scholars, students, dancers, choreographers, and the general public.

DHC Fellows were integrally involved in projects that have served the field of dance studies, contributing to greater access to seminal collections and resources, including among others:

- UCLA's Isadora Duncan collection
- American Folklife Center's Alan Lomax Choreometrics Collection
- Anna Halprin Collection at the Museum of Performance + Design
- Marcel Marceau Collection at Ohio State University
- Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival online catalog
- New York Public Library's Dance Oral History Channel and streaming video portal

³ <http://blog.nyhistory.org/the-dancing-cavalier-the-dual-lives-of-edward-ferrero>; <http://blog.nyhistory.org/fleeting-magic-designs-arnold-genthe-and-the-dance>, etc.

- Philadelphia Local Dance History Project

In addition, Fellows' involvement helped to safeguard collections still in the hands of their creators, ensuring these materials will become more available for research use, including Lula Washington Dance Theatre, Lar Lubovitch Dance Company, The Silk Road Project, Dance Theatre of Harlem, and Glen Tetley Legacy.

4. Creating demand for dance librarians among groups that need their services.

The Fellowship program made it possible offer short-term help of a trained archivist to dance companies and independent artists, who often feel overwhelmed by the demands of organizing and safeguarding their legacy materials. While they highly value these materials and need to use them to support their creative work and strengthen their organizations, they are frequently unsure of how to set priorities, what best practices to apply, and what resources are available. When they do not seek help from information professionals, artists and arts organizations may be the victims of well-meaning efforts by volunteers, untrained interns, or board members, whose actions may permanently damage legacy materials (for instance, transferring videotapes to DVD—a non-preservation format—and discarding the tapes). The assistance of an information professional, especially one who is knowledgeable about the special needs of performing artists, can be invaluable in setting goals and parameters for projects, putting systems in place and documenting them to ensure consistency, and giving reliable advice and recommendations. Not only do the artists who work with Fellows gain awareness of the value of professional archivists, but the advantages of these partnerships are shared through artists' peer networks. Over the past five years, Dance Heritage Coalition has observed an exponential increase in artists contacting DHC seeking help, often inquiring about the possibility of obtaining a Fellow or an archival assessment.

Kathi Isham, a 2014 Fellow, wrote of her practicum with the Ruth Page Foundation in Chicago: “I learned a lot about fostering relationships with arts organizations from interacting with the staff at the Ruth Page Foundation. I also learned how different staff members think about the records they create and their potential importance. I hope this experience will make me more empathetic and effective in my work with other organizations and creators. I also hope my work will make the ongoing donation to the Newberry easier to process and records will be stored in better conditions. The best potential outcome is if the RPC staff speak positively to other arts organizations about this experience and influence them to be proactive about creating archives for themselves.”

5. Adding to documentation of best practices for organization, preservation, and management of dance materials.

In order to provide long-term benefits to arts organizations and institutions hosting Fellows, many practicum projects included the creation of manuals, guides, or assessment reports. During orientation week in 2012, Fellows benefited from a mentoring session with former DHC Fellow Arlene Yu, who discussed the records management guide she created for Shen Wei Dance Arts during her Fellowship. Nichole Arvin created a manual on best practices for digitization and digital asset management for Dance Theatre of Harlem; Jennifer Kishi created a collections assessment report for the Advanced Computing Center for the Arts and Design at Ohio State University and presented it to staff and management. These documents remain useful to the organizations for which they were created, and are also retained by DHC as blueprints for creating more general guides freely available online, such as the Artist's Legacy Toolkit

and Records Management Guide, which drew on Yu's templates. By blogging about their Fellowship projects, Fellows also created a permanent record of the best practices they applied.

Case studies

Case Study 1: Irlanda Jacinto

Irlanda Jacinto, a Mexican-American student at the University of Arizona, was born and raised in the border cities of El Paso, TX and Ciudad Juarez, MX, and was the first person in her family to graduate from a university in the United States and attend graduate school. Keenly interested in working with dance materials, she had used an internship at the University of Arizona Dance Resources Center to envision and begin shaping the Resources Center into an archive. While several DHC member archives were interested in hosting Irlanda, UCLA was selected because the project there (preparing Isadora Duncan materials for digitization) was a good fit for her interest in digitization. Her practicum was with Lula Washington Dance Company, an important regional African-American company whose collection UCLA's Special Collections is interested in acquiring.

Following her graduation, Irlanda was hired as Data and Operations specialist at University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. She has continued to remain actively involved with dance archives in many capacities. She spearheaded the transfer of the Ballet El Paso archives to the University of Texas El Paso and has volunteered time to processing them. She wrote a cover story for *Performance!*, the newsletter of the Society of American Archivists Performing Arts Roundtable, about a unique collection of materials relating to ice dancing. She also contributed two articles to the Dance Heritage Coalition's online exhibition "America's Irreplaceable Dance Treasures," profiles of Donald McKayle and Iolani Luahine. She has assisted DHC on several projects: she translated a Spanish-language video recording from the collection of Mark DeGarmo to create English subtitles for the digital copy uploaded to DHC's secure media network; and she provided advice and templates for an application to NHPRC for a digitization project. In April 2015, Irlanda was hired as an Archivist at the University of Wyoming.

Case Study 2: Amanda Wick

Amanda Wick applied as a mature student embarking on a career transition from business communications. She was in her final year at Dominican University in Chicago, and was focused on finding work in a cultural heritage institution. Amanda was highly successful in her Fellowship, earning commendation from her supervisor at American Dance Festival for her ability to work independently and an output that exceeded goals for her time. In her practicum at the Ruth Page Foundation she assessed the collection and took initiative to raise concerns about materials endangered by their storage, and acted as a liaison between the Foundation and the Newberry Library, resulting in the transfer of some of the collections to the Newberry. Amanda formed many strong relationships in Chicago, working with the Chicago Film Archives, Hubbard Street Dance Theater, and as an archival consultant for the Morrison-Shearer Foundation, the legacy foundation of dancer Sybil Shearer.

She was the first professional archivist hired by the Theatre Historical Society (THS) in Evanston, Illinois, which holds records of American theater design, and through her capacity as a liaison, THS has

joined DHC-headed consortium grant proposals for processing and digitization of dance-related collections. In 2013, DHC asked Amanda to assist with the second year of the Fellowship program; she conducted interviews with applicants, assisted with logistics for the orientation week in Chicago, and co-hosted the week with project manager Imogen Smith, presenting a workshop on job search tools and building a portfolio. She arranged for the Fellows to create a collaborative assessment of Thodos Dance Chicago's collections, and volunteered to assist the company implement some of the report's recommendations. When she decided to relocate to Minneapolis, Amanda quickly found employment as Project Archivist for the Tretter Collection for GLBT Studies at the University of Minnesota.

Case Study 3: Nichole Arvin

Nichole Arvin was a student at Pratt Institute completing a double major in library sciences and digital arts, as well as a practicing choreographer and performer. At her host archive, the Jerome Robbins Dance Division of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, her primary project was working on the creation of an audiovisual website channel for the Dance Division's Oral History Project. Drawing on her technology and design skills, she created video clips and assisted in editing audio clips; she also created a mock-up of the site's main page, designed a logo, graphics, and made thumbnail images to represent the clips. She worked to create visual cohesiveness and identity for the site, and her design contributions remain a key element of this warmly received, continually expanding site.

(<http://www.nypl.org/node/177939>)

For her practicum, Nichole worked at Dance Theatre of Harlem, where her contributions went far above and beyond the initial assignment. She assessed the digital asset management system in place at DTH and wrote an extensive, substantial, accessible guide to the creation and management of digital assets. In addition, she collaborated with DTH archivist Judy Tyrus to design a pilot program for Media in Motion, a course for the school's summer intensive students that teaches about the company's history using materials from the archive, and also engages the students in using digital technology to document dance. Benefiting from Nichole's superb design and conceptual skills, the course was successfully implemented, and serves as an innovative model for other holders of cultural heritage materials. In 2014, Nichole was invited to present about Media in Motion at the highly selective international conference of SIBMAS (the International Association of Libraries, Museums, Archives and Documentation Centres of the Performing Arts) in New York City, a notable achievement for a young professional. Nichole continues to produce artwork that combines choreography, digital arts, and archives, such as *Traces*, presented at the Electronic Literature Organization conference in 2014.

Case Study 4: Jennifer Kishi

Jennifer Kishi was a Japanese-American student in her second year at UCLA when she applied for a Fellowship. During her Fellowship, Jennifer was the subject of an article in Ampersand, the online newsletter of UCLA's school of information: <http://ampersand.gseis.ucla.edu/jennifer-maiko-kishi-former-ballerina-en-pointe-with-dance-heritage-coalition-fellowship/> She had already devoted serious thought to issues of preserving performing arts; for instance, she had written a research paper on the

preservation and documentation of new media (time-based) art through an exploration of various existing methods, strategies, standards, and initiatives. She also demonstrated a strong interest and extensive skills in digital media technologies. These skills enabled her to do advanced work in her Fellowship at Ohio State University's Lawrence & Lee Theatre Research Institute. Her major project was a collaboration with ACCAD (Advanced Computing Center for the Arts and Design), where she performed a collection assessment, wrote an extensive report with detailed recommendations, and presented her work to the staff, who were excited to proceed with the archival project. For her practicum, Jennifer worked on research and user-testing for development of Dance Heritage Coalition's Dance Preservation and Digitization Project, a secure digital repository for archival dance materials. This project, which was geared to Jennifer's keen interest in user experience and user interfaces, required her to develop feasible short-term goals within a large ongoing project, and she was able to make significant contributions. As a result, at the end of her fellowship DHC hired Jennifer to manage a digitization station in San Francisco to transfer analog dance videos to preservation-quality digital files. Jennifer was able to oversee the set-up of equipment, troubleshooting, establishment of workflow procedures, outreach to artists, and supervision and training of a 2014 DHC Fellow (Keahiahi Long). She left this position when she moved to Los Angeles to take a job as digital archivist to artist Sterling Ruby. In 2014, Jennifer was awarded a Code4Lib Diversity Conference Scholarship from the Digital Library Federation. In 2015, Jennifer co-founded Los Angeles Archivists Collective (LAAC), an organization for local archivists with a strong focus on community outreach: <https://laacollective.wordpress.com/>. LAAC set up a personal digital archiving workshop through the Women's Center for Creative Work, and has plans to offer a similar workshop specifically to the dance/performing arts community.

Case Study 5: Elizabeth Hollenbeck

Elizabeth Hollenbeck, a student at Texas Woman's University, had a well-developed interest in digital libraries and archives and a broad background in the arts, including ceramic sculpture, writing, and dance; an internship at Interlochen Center for the Arts had given her experience in working with performing arts archives. Elizabeth thrived in her Fellowship at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival Archives, where she was tasked with performing research and needs analysis to identify an open-source software for mounting online exhibitions and displaying archival finding aids. Elizabeth gave a presentation to the senior staff on her findings, and her choice of Omeka has been successfully implemented. She also created a test exhibition transferring a physical exhibition of photographs to an online format, using her digital expertise in coding and website design. Elizabeth continued to build on her work with online exhibitions in her practicum with the Jeannette Neill Dance Studio, a seminal jazz dance school in Boston. There she helped the studio prepare for the commemoration of its 35th anniversary by digitizing videos and preparing video clips and files for a web exhibit, work that has enabled the JNDS staff to draw more on their institutional history. Following her graduation, Elizabeth was hired as a reference librarian at McAllen Public Library in Texas, where she has been able to take on a variety of projects in addition to providing public service. In 2014, Elizabeth received travel support from DHC to attend the SAA conference in Washington, DC, where she met with the 2014 DHC Fellows, including Brittany Austin, whose Fellowship at Jacob's Pillow continued some of Elizabeth's projects. Elizabeth worked with 2014 Fellow Lyla Medeiros on developing a linked data (RDF/OWL) ontology for costumes: <https://metadanceproject.wordpress.com/>

Case Study 6: Keahiahi Long

Keahiahi Long was the first student from Hawaii to apply for a Fellowship; she is a Native Hawaiian hula practitioner with a family legacy in hula, and is passionate about preserving traditional Hawaiian dance. She also expressed a strong interest in digital collections and management of digital moving images. During the application process, Keahiahi noted that the library science program she was enrolled in at the University of Hawaii (the only accredited LIS program in Hawaii) was primarily focused on school librarianship, and hence did not provide substantial coursework or work study opportunities keyed to her interests in dance or digital collections. DHC therefore considered her an ideal candidate for a Fellowship that could provide these opportunities. The Museum of Performance + Design in San Francisco was selected as the best host archive for Keahiahi because it houses one of DHC's digitization hubs, where she train in all aspects of digitizing videos to archival preservation standards.

She requested a practicum in Hawaii, where she wished to remain post-graduation, and she was able to apply her experience with moving images in her six weeks at 'Ulu'ulu: The Henry Ku'ualoha Giugni Moving Image Archive of Hawai'i, where she surveyed moving image collections to identify dance materials. An additional opportunity was created for Keahiahi when she returned to the continental U.S. for the SAA conference in Washington, DC. Following the conference she flew to Columbus, Ohio to visit the Lawrence & Lee Theatre Research Institute at Ohio State University, where she had been invited by DHC board trustee Nena Couch to view the collection of Carl Wolz, which contained items relating to hula. As Keahiahi wrote in an engaging blog post, she spent time with former DHC fellow Rachael Riggs Leyva examining a notation score for some hula gestures: Rachael was able to read the notation, while Keahiahi had knowledge of hula gestures and was able to make observations about how they have changed over time based on the historic notation. OSU Library's blog also carried a brief item about this visit: <http://library.osu.edu/blogs/theatre-research-institute/2014/08/19/lovely-hula-hands/> Keahiahi is now Hawaiian/Pacific reference librarian at Leeward Community College.

Case Study 7: Brittany Austin

Brittany Austin was a student in the online LIS program at San Jose State University who learned of the DHC Fellowships from former Fellow Christi Weindorf, also an alumna of SJSU. DHC has made efforts to create opportunities for students in all-online programs (an ever growing trend), who have fewer chances to form connections with peers and get hands-on experience. Brittany's fellowship was hosted by the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival archives, where she worked on augmenting and improving the Omeka platform that acts as the online catalog for the archives (instituted with the help of 2013 Fellow Elizabeth Hollenbeck). Using her skills at coding as well as metadata, she was able to improve search and browse functions. She also performed importing and batch editing of records into a Collective Access database for digital content shares among departments, and created procedures for future interns to continue this work. Brittany took full advantage of her time at the Pillow to attend dance performances and talks, take dance classes, and learn from dance scholars in residence about how researchers use archival dance collections.

Following her six weeks at Jacob's Pillow, Brittany relocated to Philadelphia to complete her practicum with the Philadelphia Dance Project, which was the site of Fellow Nicole Topich's practicum in 2012. She assisted with creating metadata for artists' collections to facilitate the transfer of archives to Temple University Special Collections Research Center, and also contributed to the creation of the Local Dance History Project, an interactive website documenting the Philadelphia dance community. Brittany interviewed PDP founder and executive director Terry Fox to create a blog post for DHC's Artist-Driven Archives website. (<https://artistdrivenarchives.wordpress.com/2013/12/03/creativespaces/#ldhp>) In January 2015, Brittany was hired as a Project Archivist at Jacob's Pillow, reflecting the outstanding success of her Fellowship there, and how much her contributions and skills were valued by archives director Norton Owen. Brittany was also hired to assist DHC with redesign of the online exhibit "America's Irreplaceable Dance Treasures."

Case Study 8: Lotus Norton-Wisla

Lotus Norton-Wisla was a graduating student at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She displayed a strong commitment to working with culturally specific materials and creating access for underserved groups, demonstrated by her work with the Oneida Nation Museum. Lotus's fellowship was hosted by the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, where she worked on the Alan Lomax Choreometrics collection, a large and important collection of films documenting dance from around the world. Lotus created priorities for digitization of film and paper materials, improved metadata, processed sections of the paper materials, and communicated with other institutional partners in the Choreometrics project. The culturally specific nature of the collection meshed perfectly with Lotus's interests; she wrote an extensive and informative blog about her work, and was invited to contribute a guest post to the Library of Congress blog: <http://blogs.loc.gov/folklife/2014/07/lomax-choreometrics-collection/> For her practicum, Lotus remained at the AFC and worked to create a topic guide to dance and movement collections. She also worked at the Historical Society of Washington to improve the accessibility of dance collections; she assessed collections and performed processing on the Erika Thimey collection, added to the finding aid, and provided recommendations for preservation and future digitization of the collection. After her Fellowship, Lotus was successful in her application for a "dream job" as Tribal Digital Archives Curriculum Coordinator at the Washington State University libraries, a three year position working with tribes throughout the U.S. in a learning cohort about digital archives and preservation. Lotus felt that her experience as a DHC Fellow helped her prepare for this position; in July 2015 she wrote that she is "working with my own cohort of 6 pairs of tribal archivists/librarians from tribal communities all over the US. We just got done with 5 site visits to their nations, and I relied heavily on my DHC training in collections assessments!"

Next Steps:

Building on Success

The impact of "From Preservation to Access," both on the professional development of the Fellows and on the collections, institutions, and communities they worked with, clearly advocates for continuing and

expanding the program. Successful features of the program can be adapted to address key needs identified by DHC in the dance heritage field.

“Processing at Accession” and working with “Living Archives”

Recent DHC initiatives, including the Fellowship program and the IMLS-funded project “Strengthening Living Archives,” highlight the need to provide greater assistance to active performing artists and their organizations in order to safeguard their collections and expedite the process of transferring these collections to archival repositories where they can be made broadly accessible. The “Processing at Accession” workflow model offers a potential solution that allows artists to be more involved in the processing and description of their legacy collections, and improves efficiency for repositories, enabling them to take more collections and make them available more expeditiously.⁴ In this model, which replaces a two-step system of accessioning followed by processing, repositories work with living donors to prepare collections prior to accessioning, so that collections can receive minimal processing at the time that they are accessioned and be made immediately available to users.

As this innovative model is adopted by more institutions, there is a need for emerging professionals to gain skills in the “Processing at Accession” workflow and experience in working directly with active donors. A Fellowships model that assigns Fellows to work with both the donor and the repository interested in acquiring the collection will have multiple benefits: creating access to new dance research collections and enabling repositories to acquire significant contemporary dance materials; advancing and refining the “Processing at Accession” model through the collection of metrics documenting effectiveness; participatory hands-on learning for students or emerging professionals who will gain skills in tracking and reporting metrics; donor relations; scalable project management; and dissemination of learning to the field.

Focus on Audiovisual Preservation

Many small cultural heritage organizations hold collections of at-risk audiovisual materials but lack staff who have expertise in identifying, curating, or handling these materials. As noted by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), “Web documents, audiovisuals, sound recordings, and data sets are an increasing part of everyday life and communication for much of the world. Rapidly these media are forming a substantial part of the cultural record.”⁵ In 1993 the Librarian of Congress alerted Congress to the deterioration risks of audiovisual material and noted that the materials most at risk included “independent productions that were hidden away in nonprofit and public organizations from coast to coast.”⁶

⁴ Christine Weideman, “Accessioning as Processing,” *The American Archivist*, Vol. 69 (Fall/Winter 2006): 274–283.

⁵ Association of Research Libraries, “Research Libraries’ Enduring Responsibility for Preservation,” (ARL, 24 Jul. 2007). www.arl.org/storage/documents/publications/preservation-responsibility-24july07.pdf.

⁶ National Film Preservation Foundation, “Report to the U.S. Congress for the Year Ending December 31, 2011,” (NFPF, 18 Apr. 2012) 2. www.filmpreservation.org/userfiles/image/PDFs/nfpf_ar2011.pdf.

While these organizations will likely contract with vendors to digitize AV materials, it is vital for staff to know best practices for planning and managing an AV digitization project: curation, setting priorities based on format and content, creating metadata, selecting preservation formats, supervising outsourced digitization, understanding copyright and fair use, and implementing file storage and maintenance. There are few opportunities for professionals to gain hands-on experience with specialized audiovisual and digitization equipment and training by AV preservation professionals, unless they attend one of the very few master's programs offered in moving image preservation.

DHC has established community-based digitization hubs in New York, San Francisco, and Washington, DC, to transfer obsolete video formats to preservation-quality digital files, from which broadcast-quality and streamable files can be derived. A number of the DHC Fellows expressed strong interest in working with audiovisual digitization projects and were able to spend their practicums working at one of DHC's digitization hubs, learning to manage workflow and perform donor outreach as well as gaining familiarity with equipment, software, and metadata creation.

A Fellowship program focused on teaching project management for audiovisual digitization would make use of the digitization hubs for cohort training sessions, followed by onsite residencies at cultural heritage institutions and hands-on digitizing experience. This program would increase immediately the number of professionals qualified to manage the preservation digitization of audiovisual materials containing important cultural, historical, and artistic materials, and awareness of best practices and workflows would spread to other professionals and staff as Fellows share their knowledge and skills with co-workers and colleagues in the archiving field.

Shared Services for the Dance Community

In surveys conducted and meetings convened by DHC, artists consistently describe lack of resources, time, and expertise as the primary challenge they faced in documenting and preserving artifacts of their performances.⁷ Increasingly, artists work independently, without the infrastructure provided by an established company. Few artists or small arts organizations can afford to retain a dedicated archivist or videographer, or purchase equipment needed for high-quality documentation and secure storage of digital assets.

The number of dance companies in this country creating dance material of potential archival significance is substantial. Dance/USA, a national service organization for professional dance, lists 148 dance companies with budgets of over \$500,000 and approximately 350 dance organizations with budgets over \$100,000.⁸ Inquiries by DHC staff at industry conferences and forums indicate that only a handful of these organizations have access to trained archivists to organize and preserve existing and constantly accumulating new material. Many artists and companies have contacted DHC seeking assistance with organizing and preserving their collections, however they rarely have resources to pay for this work, and applying for the limited funds available to arts organizations for archiving can be a daunting process.

⁷ See "Strengthening Living Archives: A Plan for Empowering Artists and Communities," a white paper by Dance Heritage Coalition and project partners, 2015.

⁸ John Munger, Director of Research at Dance/USA, communication of November 9, 2010, <http://www.danceusa.org/>

Shared services or community-based resources offer a promising solution to this chronic challenge. A DHC-trained Fellow would be assigned to work with a cohort of artists within a regional community, offering training, hands-on workshops, guidance, and reliable recommendations to strengthen records management, audiovisual preservation, and digital stewardship. Rather than completing work themselves, the Fellows would establish guidelines and provide training, and check in regularly to offer support and ensure follow-through of projects. This model offers an opportunity to greatly increase artists' access to professional archival assistance; strengthens peer networks as artists are able to support one another's work; and also provides learning and training benefits to Fellows who gain perspective on the diverse challenges within the field and form strong ties within a community.

Peer-to-Peer Learning

All of these Fellowship programs can be enhanced by increasing opportunities for Fellows to provide training and mentorship to peers, as well as outreach and training to artists and arts administration professionals. Providing outreach and training to user communities is an increasingly important element of libraries' missions,⁹ and the experience of creating workshops and interacting with learners reinforces skills and training that Fellows have gained.¹⁰ All three Fellowship models proposed here could incorporate opportunities for a second phase in which Fellows, having received training and mentorship, pass on their learning to others.

Additional steps to strengthen the peer learning aspect of the Fellowships might include formally assigning Fellows to mentor incoming cohorts, and engaging current or former Fellows in collaborative projects, for instance through a "micro-grant" program or scholarships to attend conferences for former Fellows who present or publish on their work. While these kinds of collaboration have occurred spontaneously, formal mechanisms to support them would increase the number of projects and partnerships undertaken, and advance the goal of strengthening nationwide networks of librarians and archivists dedicated to dance and performing arts materials, which is one element of DHC's core mission. In follow-up surveys reflecting on their experience, Fellows expressed a strong desire and commitment to stay in touch with their cohorts and maintain valuable connections they had made through the program.

The impact of the "Preservation to Access" Fellowships continues to ripple outward as the former Fellows advance through their professional lives and find ways to apply their skills and interests to serving the dance heritage field. DHC hopes that the Fellowship model developed and implemented through "Preservation to Access" will inspire and support other programs that contribute to professional growth and promote the vitality of America's cultural heritage.

⁹ See "Learning in Libraries," an IMLS Focus summary report: <https://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/publications/documents/imlsfocuslearninginlibrariesfinalreport.pdf>

¹⁰ See the "train-the-trainer" model implemented by the Library of Congress Digital Preservation Outreach and Education (DPOE) program (<http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/education/ttt.html>), which provides certification through workshops to learners who commit to training colleagues.