

NDNP Awardee Interim Performance Report

(July 1, 2009--December 30, 2009)

NEH Award Number: PJ-50046-09
NDNP State: South Carolina
Submitted By: Kate Boyd, Digital Librarian, University of South Carolina (USC)
Craig Keeney, Cataloging Librarian, USC
Santi Thompson, SC NDNP Project Manager, USC
Report Date: 29 January 2010

INTERIM PERFORMANCE REPORT NARRATIVE

1. Describe any changes that you have made or that you anticipate making in the project work plan or methodology from the award proposal submitted to the competition.

In the first working quarter, there have been no major changes to the proposed work schedule submitted to NEH in the award proposal. SC NDNP has successfully hired project staff, assembled selection recommendations from the advisory board, analyzed and created metadata for 43 rolls of microfilm, selected a vendor for the digitization process, and started the duplication of second generation microfilm with the South Carolina Department of History and Archives (SCDAH).

2. Please describe any selection or film acquisition/evaluation activities during the performance period.

In August 2009, project staff assembled an advisory board for newspaper title selections. After explaining the selection criteria process, which emphasized the need for geographic and cultural diversity among the newspaper titles, the advisory board was tasked to vote on particular titles. The committee made a consensus decision to include nine African-American newspaper titles. After receiving the votes, the Project Manager tallied and shared the most popular with the committee for final approval. As a result, the advisory board identified 23 titles for digitization. The project manager will send these titles to LC in February.

The project manager and metadata assistants selected a reel to act as the sample reel for the project. They analyzed the reel, created general, structural, and reel metadata for the vendor, and sent the material to the vendor for digitization in December 2009. They received the digital files from the vendor in January 2010. After verifying the files, the project team realized that there were formatting errors in the Volume Number field. They will deliver the sample reel to LC once they have corrected the errors, have revalidated the data, and have verified the validation. The delivery will be made as soon as the changes are made, with a goal of sending the material off in the first week of February 2010.

In addition to the sample reel, the metadata assistants have analyzed and created general, structural, and reel metadata for 43 reels of microfilm, which comprise the first two batches of the project.

3. Describe any specific award activities that have taken place between collaborating institutions in your state.

In October 2009, the project manager contacted the micrographics manager at SCDAH and delivered the list of microfilm reels to be duplicated. SCDAH holds the master negatives and will be producing the second generation negatives for the project. To date, the SCDAH has created the sample reel and continues to work on additional titles.

The Project manager is also working with the duplication services office at the LC to obtain African-American newspapers held by LC. As of this report, the Project manager has requested and purchased the microfilm. LC duplication services will be duplicating a total of five reels for the SC NDNP Project.

4. Describe specifically your progress in conversion and/or vendor selection (attach documentation as desired).

The project team completed the RFP process in November 2009. After reviewing six proposals, project administrators selected Apex/CoVantage to act as the digitizing vendor for the project.

The project manager will continue to track the conversion process. He will coordinate the logistics of duplicating microfilm with SCDAH, of digitizing the microfilm with Apex, and of submitting the materials to LC. To date, Apex has digitized the sample reel. After receiving approval of the sample reel from LC, the project manager will send the metadata and second generation microfilm to Apex for digitization. The first shipment to the vendor will include materials for two batches.

To streamline the process, the project team will begin having weekly phone conversations with the vendor project manager in February 2010.

5. Do you have any questions or comments regarding the use of the tools provided by LC (Digital Viewer Validation)?

For the most part, the project team found the DVV to be easy to use and helpful when performing quality control. The team would suggest that future versions of the DVV include a zooming/magnifying option for the thumbnail viewer. The thumbnail viewer was an important tool for quality control and expanding the viewing capabilities would improve the process of checking images.

6. Provide an update on your planned schedule for delivery of digital assets to the NDNP repository. Include anticipated number of files to be delivered and planned means of delivery or transfer. (Keep in mind the delivery deadlines noted in the Cooperative Agreement Document, but also take into consideration your own resources and workflow plans. LC requests that you plan to deliver new data monthly, with one batch per hard drive. Batches that have been submitted and require rework should be shipped to LC as soon as fixes are complete (send more than one hard drive at a time, if needed).

After changing the data in the Volume Number field to correspond with NDNP specifications, the project team will submit the sample reel to LC. The project team anticipates that the sample reel will be sent to LC by the end of the first week in February.

They will begin sending batches of material on external hard drives to the vendor for digitization once they receive confirmation that the sample reel has been approved. If the sample reel is rejected, the team will make the appropriate changes and implement any needed adjustments into the workflow process.

Once the project team learns that LC has approved the sample reel, they will send several batches (two are completed as of this report and an additional two are near completion) to the vendor. The batches will contain approximately 9500 images each. The team will begin the monthly delivery of materials to LC once they receive and verify batch images and metadata from the vendor. They anticipate that this process will be in full working order by the end of March, 2010.

7. State briefly the status of any other digitized newspaper activities in your or collaborating partners' institutions (non-NDNP-funded).

There are currently no other digitized newspaper activities occurring at USC Libraries.

8. Please provide copies of or URLs for any public presentations or publications on topics related to your participation in NDNP (or describe future plans for such).

USC Library administration has expressed an interest in sharing the news of the SC NDNP with the public. Preliminary meetings between administration and project staff have resulted in plans to visit cities around the state that will be represented by newspaper titles in the current NDNP award cycle. No firm dates have been set at this time; however, SC NDNP staff will keep NEH and LC updated with information.

The SC NDNP has received attention from various newspapers from around South Carolina. See below for a list of articles with corresponding URLs.

- A. "USC at Leading Edge of Newspaper, Film Digitization," *The Free-Times* (Columbia, S.C.), (http://www.free-times.com/index.php?cat=121304064644348&z_Issue_ID=11010311090903415&Show_ArchiveArticle_ID=11010411093619985&Year=2009)
- B. "Project will put history before vast audience," *The Times and Democrat* (Orangeburg, S.C.), (<http://thetandd.com/articles/2009/10/07/opinion/doc4acbc458adb83652014864.txt>)
- C. "Read all about it," *The Post and Courier* (Charleston, S.C.), (<http://www.postandcourier.com/news/2009/sep/30/read-all-about-it/>)
- D. "Old issues of 21 S.C. papers going online," *The Sumter Item*, (Sumter, S.C.), (<http://www.theitem.com/article/20090923/ITNEWS01/709239943>)

9. Describe any follow-up issues or questions you would like convey to the NDNP program committee as you begin your digital conversion project.

During the first quarter, the project team has submitted questions to Deborah Thomas and has received valuable answers from her. They will continue to notify the NDNP committee when questions occur.

Please submit to your NEH Program Officer (preservation@neh.gov) with a copy to ndnptech@loc.gov, by January 31, 2010.