Case Western Reserve University and Western Reserve Historical Society Renew Agreement to Strengthen Library Collaboration

CLEVELAND, OH—Case Western Reserve University and the Western Reserve Historical Society have renewed an agreement to collaborate on a number of library and archival projects. The agreement, known as the Memorandum of Understand between the two parties, also allows access to both collections for the appropriate staff at each institution.

The agreement builds on the strengths of each institution to facilitate efficient and thorough research and scholarly writing, as well as to enrich the knowledge of the Western Reserve region. For example, the new Memorandum of Understanding allows Case Western Reserve faculty to have gratis admission to the research library of WRHS. As a reciprocal benefit, selected staff members of WRHS have access to the extensive collections of the Kelvin Smith Library (KSL) at CWRU. The agreement also simplifies the borrowing and lending of elements of each collection. Photographs from the WRHS Allen E. Cole collection are currently on display in the KSL on the campus at Case Western Reserve.

The two institutions, which both reside in University Circle, entered a memorandum of understanding to pilot a number of small projects in 2010. This original understanding was key to linking one of the nation’s largest urban history collections at WRHS with the digitizing capabilities and knowledge at the research institution of Case Western Reserve University. The continued projects have the potential to set the stage for a long-term partnership to share resources that complement the institutions’ existing collections.

“The agreement is the beginning for some fantastic things in the future,” said Timothy Robson, the associate director for Academic Engagement of the Kelvin Smith Library at Case Western Reserve.

John Grabowski, the Krieger-Mueller Historian and Vice President for Collections at the Western Reserve Historical Society and Case Western Reserve’s Krieger-Mueller Associate Professor of Applied History, agreed, “I’m excited about the possibilities this offers the two institutions. The historical society has sets of primary research materials that relate directly to the strategic plan
initiatives at the university. We couldn't be more thrilled to continue the facilitation of this partnership between two great Cleveland institutions.”

WRHS is home to 5,000 fully catalogued collections, which range from a few papers in a collection to over 400 boxes in others. The historical society has 20 million manuscripts and more than 5 million of photographs, maps, broadsides and other printed materials. These materials include social justice, business and entrepreneurship, medicine, and histories of African Americans, LGBT groups, immigrant, and Jewish and other religions.

One of the main audiences for the digitization is the students and faculty of Case Western Reserve University. The digital technology and cataloguing capabilities of the Kelvin Smith Library have the ability to help WRHS move its vast connections into the digital realm. Ultimately, this move will increase accessibility to the collections of WRHS and CWRU to the public.

Kelvin Smith Library (KSL) is the main library supporting the teaching and research of Case Western Reserve University. The University Archives, Kulas Music Library and the Astronomy Library are part of Kelvin Smith Library. KSL also provides technology services such as the online public catalog and circulation systems to the other campus libraries and to its affiliate libraries. KSL is located at 11055 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, OH 44106. For more information, visit library.case.edu or contact Arnold Hirshon, Associate Provost & University Librarian, at arnold.hirshon@case.edu or 216-368-0688.

The Western Reserve Historical Society History Center is located in Cleveland’s University Circle at 10825 East Boulevard. Museum hours are Tuesday - Saturday 10:00am - 5:00pm and Sunday, Noon - 5:00pm. Western Reserve Historical Society members and children two and under are free of charge. The research library is open Thursday – Saturday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Admission is $10 for adults, $10 and $5 for children 3-12. Group rates are available. Parking lot fees are paid at the admission desk during museum hours.

*Founded in 1867, Western Reserve Historical Society (WRHS) is Northeast Ohio’s premier storyteller based on its vast collection of the tangible history of Northeast Ohio—such as: automobiles, airplanes, archives, books, carousel horses, ceramics, decorative arts, diaries, furniture, gardens, garments, genealogical resources, historic buildings, letters, maps, paintings,*
photographs, shoes, toys, uniforms, and weapons. It is one of the oldest and largest nonprofit regional historical societies in the nation. It presents the lives and activities of 19th-century settlers through historic Hale Farm & Village in Bath, Ohio, and it presents the glitter and industry of the Gilded Age of through the history of Cleveland’s millionaires and entrepreneurs. WRHS offers a wealth of resources to research your family heritage at the History Center in University Circle, Cleveland. For more information on the Western Reserve Historical Society, 10825 East Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44106 visit www.wrhs.org or contact Jane M. Mason, Vice President of Communications and Marketing, jmason@wrhs.org or 216-721-572 ext. 1501.

WRHS receives public support with local tax dollars from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture. Sponsorships, bequests, grants, admissions, and other funding are used to preserve and enrich the region’s artistic and cultural heritage.

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