

Louisa Bowen Memorial Scholarship for Graduate Students in Archival Administration

The Louisa Bowen Memorial Scholarship for Graduate Students in Archival Administration is dedicated to providing financial assistance to a resident or full-time student of the MAC region who is pursuing graduate education in archival administration. The Louisa Bowen Memorial Scholarship Committee is very pleased to award **Lena Evers-Hillstrom** a scholarship that will support her future contributions to the archives profession. Evers-Hillstrom is an MLIS student at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. The committee was impressed by her strong and forward-thinking commitment to archives and the role that they play in society. Congratulations Lena Evers-Hillstrom! Her essay follows.

Louisa Bowen Scholarship Award

Lena Evers-Hillstrom

The Louisa Bowen Scholarship will help facilitate my continued involvement in digital platforms for archives, including the Indigenous Seed Keepers Network project, as well as in my academic work with oral histories. Begun during my time this spring as a student in the Tribal Libraries, Archives, and Museums class at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, the seed-keeping initiative was begun under the direction of Jessika Greendeer and Dan Cornelius, two Indigenous seed keepers. The goal of the Indigenous Seed Keepers Network Collection was to kickstart the creation of a digital archive that would showcase the cultural importance of seeds not just as materials to be grown, but as living beings that have different journeys within and between tribes, and around the world. Created using the content platform Mukurtu and with the help of Erin Hughes at WiLS (formally Wisconsin Library Services), community records within digital heritage entries highlight how different seeds are being grown in a diverse range of tribal communities, as well as their cultural connections to those communities and seed keepers within those communities.



Lena Evers-Hillstrom

I hope to continue working with this collection beyond the end of this semester because I feel a strong connection with seeds and the resiliency in tribal communities that they represent, and I want to continue helping in the collaborative effort to make the seed entries as well represented as possible in an online format. While I have made digital heritage entries for several types of corn, my goal is to expand into making entries for other types of seeds involved in seed keeping, including squash and sunflowers. And, as the project moves forward, I hope to continue participating with seed keepers in discussion about how to utilize Mukurtu, and the access protocols and metadata fields within Mukurtu, for the project.

The Bowen Scholarship will also help aid in my work at the Department of Oral History, headed by my supervisor, Troy Reeves. Through the Department of Oral History, I am continuing to work on a project that collects histories from individuals at the former UW colleges, which have now become branch campuses within the UW System. Part of my work involves cataloging these histories, creating indexes summarizing what people have said, and making this information accessible online for future users within the UW Digital Collections through the Oral History Metadata Synchronizer. Having worked with oral histories in the past, coming to UW–Madison and being able to continue conducting oral histories has only strengthened my viewpoint that oral histories add an extra dimension to existing historical narratives.

Through this work and the work with the Indigenous Seed Keepers Network Collection, I will be continuing to explore the diverse forms that archival collections can take, as well as the different platforms through which we can make them accessible digitally. When people think of archives, they do not always think of oral histories or seeds as traditional materials that belong in an archive. But both are just as important in showing how archives can increase representation of people's voices within a given community in a meaningful way. These activities, aided by the Louisa Bowen Scholarship, will help bolster my education at the UW–Madison Information School.