

Awards and Scholarships

Archie Motley Memorial Scholarship for Students of Color

By David Satten-López



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Thank you so much for the honor and support of the Archie Motley Memorial Scholarship for Students of Color. I am excited to continue to make my way in the field.

My interest in archives stems primarily from the power audiovisual artifacts have had over me. Through primary source materials such as political speeches, interviews, music, commercials, and often in what might be overlooked as paratext, I have found a feeling of historical intimacy that propels my further exploration. Often, in college, I'd find myself scrolling through the last pages of interlibrary loan to pick out minimally described mystery cassettes and VHS's. I'd catch myself deeply engaged and learning from these recordings, often struck by how closely they speak to the present. Most specifically, this came to the forefront of my experience while listening to media that documents, and often laments, US politics of the 1970s.

Since finding this passion in myself, I found myself pursuing paraprofessional roles in the field, trying to stay close to primary source materials. One was at a poetry archive, digitizing and preserving the recordings of poets reading their work. In another, I digitized and photographed 78 rpm (revolutions per minute) records. And, most recently, I built community relations and a web platform for Quaker manumission documents, supporting a more honest history of Quaker slaveholding and the lives of those they enslaved. Now, in the process of getting my master's degree, I continue to find perspective and hope in primary source materials. The hope is that these resources will continue to move me, and that, one day, I might help others to be moved.

My goal is to support the use and access of primary source materials, especially for educators and historians. I hope to pursue this goal between and through the fields of archives and digital scholarship. I intend to foster access to noncirculating materials in a myriad of ways, mindful of the diversity of computing and bandwidth capacities among our users. I wholeheartedly believe in the ability of primary source materials to sharpen our collective analyses, which I believe to be a fundamental, though insufficient, step in achieving any equity and reparation. I am excited to take on this moment, and challenge, in the field, to craft meaningful scholarship in which ethic moves through an awareness of the structural inequities of power of the present and past.

I am grateful to have the support of MAC and to strive to do my work in a way that will make my teachers, my mentors, and my communities proud.