

## Archives of American Art (AAA)

The Latina Papers: Primary Sources for *Documents of Latin American and Latino Art*  
(In partnership with the International Center for the Arts of the Americas (ICAA))

Joshua T. Franco, Ph.D., National Collector, AAA

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### Project Overview:

With over thirty million items and counting, the [Archives of American Art](#) (AAA) is the world's largest repository for documents related to the history of American art. In 2015, AAA hired a Latino Collections Specialist to focus on acquiring papers related to [US Latino/a art](#). Building on AAA's holdings resulting from past initiatives particularly in south Florida and Texas, the Latino Collections Specialist made further acquisitions from New York, Denver, Florida, the Midwest, and the West Coast including: Cheech Marin (Oral History), Paul Ramirez Jonas, Andres Serrano, Kathy Vargas, Victor Zamudio-Taylor, and Tony Ortega. AAA's mission is to acquire primary sources—letters, diaries, journals, notes, and other unpublished writings, financial records, photographs, sketchbooks, scrapbooks, audio and video recordings, rare printed material, and the like—from artists, critics, collectors, art historians and others.

As part of the [International Center for the Arts of the Americas'](#) (ICAA) landmark *Documents of Latin American and Latino Art* digital archive project, *The Latinx Papers* seeks to identify and make accessible key documents related to the history of Latinx art as well as the trajectory of key artists and cultural figures. During this multi-year initiative, the ICAA will build upon its existing holdings with a new selection of primary documents focused on individual artists and groups as well as on critics, curators and cultural representatives.

As part of the first phase of this project, the ICAA is partnering with the AAA on the “Latina Papers.” This collaboration aims to locate in the AAA's collections documents pertaining to pioneering Latina artists, critics and curators such as, Elsa Flores Almaraz, Yolanda M. López, Amalia Mesa-Bains, María Luisa Pacheco, Patssi Valdez and Kathy Vargas, among others.

For the practicum, the fellow will work under the supervision of the Archives of American Art's National Collector to research and finalize a selection of materials that will enter the ICAA's digital archive. In addition to the National Collector, the fellow will work closely with the ICAA Director and Associate Director to select documents that fulfill the curatorial criteria set forth by the ICAA. The fellow will also focus on the history of Latina American art world figures, in accordance with Smithsonian's Women's History Initiative.

### The practicum will include the following activities:

- Research and finalize a selection of AAA materials that will enter the ICAA's digital archive.
- Assist ICAA with selection of documents that fulfill the curatorial criteria set forth by the ICAA in consultation with AAA Latino Collections Specialist.

**Practicum Goals:**

- To encourage research skills in archival collections. To identify information-rich primary source documents that succinctly document the contributions of Latinas to American art.
- To focus on the history of Latina American art world figures.

**Practicum may be best suited for students in the areas of:**

Art History, Library & Information Science, Latinx Studies, Women's Studies, History, American Studies, Art, Ethnic Studies, English, and Comparative Literature, but all encouraged to apply.

Spanish language skills preferred.

## Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (CFCH)

*Expanding the Accessibility and Metadata of Latina/o/x Archival Documentation at the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage*

Greg Adams, Interim Archives Director, CFCH

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### **Project Overview:**

The purpose of this year's LMSP fellowship is to continue to expand the accessibility of Latina/o/x archival documentation in the [Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections](#) (Rinzler Archives) at the [Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage](#) (CFCH). The Rinzler Archives is home to some of the world's most important ethnographic documentary materials, including the Smithsonian Folklife Festival (which began in 1967 as the Festival of American Folklife), original field research, special projects conducted across the country and around the world by Center curators and staff, and dozens of collections acquired and curated by the Center's non-profit record label Smithsonian Folkways Recordings (SFR).

Building on the efforts of previous LMSP fellows, this year's fellow will work in collaboration with the interim director of the Rinzler Archives to contribute to the CFCH's commitments to stewarding more than 5,300+ cubic feet of papers, photographs, audiovisual media, and a rapidly expanding footprint of digitized and born-digital content.

### **The practicum will include the following activities:**

- Assess how (in)accessibility impacts Latina/o/x archival documentation that is often 1) spread across backlogs in nearly all archival collections and 2) embedded within inactive, unprocessed departmental records that have not yet been transferred to the Rinzler Archives.
- Recommend opportunities for improving CFCH's commitment to culturally respectful collections management and enhanced community access as affirmed in the CFCH's [Shared Stewardship of Collections Policy](#) (SSCP), which was formally adopted in July 2019 and reflects more than half a century of consultation and collaboration between Center staff and source communities.
- Author one multimedia article in English and Spanish for Folklife Magazine sharing the fellow's research methods and recommendations.
- Enhance finding aid descriptions and metadata or create a subject/resource guide using critical cataloging terminology
- Identify connections between Latina/o/x materials at CFCH and those held in other Smithsonian units.
- Produce a project final report and presentation.

**Practicum Goals:**

- Drafting controlled vocabulary guidelines to further locate Latina/o/x collections items.
- Identify and respond to opportunities to foreground Latina/o/x, Afro-Latina/o/x, and Mestiza/o/x archival content
- Contribute to web-based resources that will tell larger stories about the relationships between source communities, institutions, and the shared stewardship of archival documentation.
- Strengthen familiarity with archival collections care, practices, policies, and procedures.

**Practicum may be best suited for students in the areas of:**

Library and Information Sciences, American Studies, Curatorial Studies, Latino/a/x Studies, Public History, and Digital Humanities, but all encouraged to apply.

Bilingual skills (Spanish) required. Background in library sciences strongly preferred. Familiarity with finding aids, Graph Commons, and Archives Space recommended.

## Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (CFCH)

### *Latinx Programming in Living Religion: Creative Encounters in the U.S*

Michelle Banks, Lead Curator, CFCH

Rebecca Fenton, Ph.D., Co-Curator, CFCH

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### **Project Overview:**

Founded in 1967, the [Smithsonian Folklife Festival](#) promotes folk and traditional practices and honors those who sustain them. This two-week event provides a platform on the National Mall of the United States—“America’s front lawn”—for musicians, dancers, artisans, cooks, and others to share stories of culture, creativity, and community with a broad public. The 2023 Festival dates are June 28–July 4 and July 6–9.

The 2023 Smithsonian Folklife Festival Program, *Living Religion: Creative Encounters in the U.S.*, explores how the country’s diverse religious traditions inspire a wellspring of creative encounters and expressions. The program highlights the intersectionality within Latinx communities across religious, spiritual, and ethical traditions along five themes: Makers of Faith, Sound Religion, Body and Spirit, Kitchen Theology, and Futurism.

Living Religion highlights an expansive range of Latinx cultural life, from the urban to the rural and from coast to coast to Puerto Rico. Latinx programming includes a range of presentations, such as music and dance performances, crafts and culinary demonstrations, large-scale installations, workshops and family activities, and moderated conversations.

Working with the Living Religion curatorial team, the fellow will contribute to Latinx programming and documentation efforts during the Festival related to the fellow’s research interests, which could include serving as a program presenter, writing articles related to Festival participants, and archiving Festival materials. The fellow will also help organize post-Festival events expanding on the Kitchen Theology and Futurism themes.

The Fellow must be organized, creative, enjoy collaborative work, and be comfortable working outdoors among large crowds of people.

### **The practicum will include the following activities:**

- Support Festival public programming.
- Contribute to writing Festival website content.
- Assist in organizing post-Festival events.
- Produce a final project report and presentation.

**Practicum Goals:**

- Support Latinx programming in the *Living Religion* Festival and post-Festival events.
- Document Latinx programs for archival and educational resources.
- Expand online Latinx content for *Living Religion*.

**Practicum may be best suited for students in the areas of:**

Religious Studies, Folklore Studies, Anthropology, Ethnic Studies, Latinx Studies, Cultural Studies, Food Studies, and Digital Humanities, but all are encouraged to apply.

Bilingual skills required and a background in religion is preferred.

**Festival Link:**

[\*Living Religion: Creative Encounters in the U.S.\*](#)

## National Museum of African American History (NMAAHC)

### *Guiding Latinidad in the NMAAHC's physical exhibitions*

Ariana A. Curtis, Ph.D., Curator of Latinx Studies, NMAAHC

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### **Project Overview:**

The [National Museum of African American History and Culture](#) (NMAAHC) is the only national museum devoted exclusively to the documentation of African American life, history, and culture. The Museum opened to the public on September 24, 2016, as the 19th museum of the Smithsonian Institution. The museum tells “American history through an African American lens” and is the only African American museum with a curatorial area dedicated to Latinx Studies. (The NMAAHC includes Afro Latin American and Afro Latinx art, history, and cultures as core components of Latinx Studies. They are not separate.)

“Latinidad through an African American lens” is present throughout the museum’s object collection, digital offerings, and its physical museum exhibitions, both temporary and permanent. No single exhibition focuses on Latinidad, but it is part of every exhibition’s narrative. To showcase this point when not available for tours, the curator for Latinx Studies created an unofficial guide to Latinidad in the NMAAHC’s physical exhibitions. This guide is used informally as a reference tool and for self-guided tours. Some of the exhibition stories are prominent, like Celia Cruz’s dress in Musical Crossroad, while others are less obvious, like Roberto Lugo’s Ghetto Krater in Reckoning.

The exhibitions are permanent, but objects rotate in and out. The guide, created in 2018, is now outdated. This practicum will help update, expand, and formalize the outdated guide. The fellow will tour each exhibition gallery to understand the full exhibition narrative and Latinidad’s place within it. The fellow will then choose up to four (4) exhibitions to review and update: one history, one community, one culture, and the temporary exhibition gallery, Afro-Futurism: The History of Black Futures. The new guide will be used a training tool for museum staff and docents.

### **The practicum will include the following activities:**

- Participate in an online review and physical walkthrough all museum exhibition galleries with the curator for Latinx Studies, and other curators as available
- Identify and research key objects on view in up to four NMAAHC exhibitions
- Update and possibly redesign Latinidad-centered exhibition guides for up to four exhibitions in the NMAAHC
- Create a presentation and/or talking points for each exhibition that can be used by other curators, docents, and museum staff on Latinx-centered tours
- Understand the educational opportunities and power of representation in giving Latinidad focused in-person NMAAHC tours

### **Practicum Goals:**

- Understand the multidisciplinary nature of museum exhibitions and interpretation

- Develop an understanding of how NMAAHC exhibitions differently include Latinidad through an African American lens
- Develop a deeper understanding for and ability to communicate the relationships between African American and Latin American/Latinx art, history, and cultures
- Develop object-specific and biographical research skills
- Foreground Latinx related material culture in understanding American history through an African American lens
- Gain insights about exhibition rotation cycles and object display length for a variety of collections materials
- Learn how to interpret Latinx-related material culture and stories in a way that makes them intelligible to a broad cross-section of the public, particularly those interested in African American art, history, and culture
- Gain object interpretation, public speaking, and storytelling skills
- Learn how to distill a large quantity of multimedia exhibition information into a thematic, succinct, and accessible museum tour

**Practicum may be best suited for students in the areas of:**

Museum Studies, Museum Education, African American Studies, Africana/African Diaspora Studies and History, Latin American and Caribbean History, Latina/o/x Studies, American Studies, Public History, Performance Studies, but all encouraged to apply.

Spanish language skills preferred.



## National Museum of African American History (NMAAHC)

*Art Smith: Black Connections to A Midcentury Modernist Jeweler*

Joanne Hyppolite, Ph.D., Supervisory Curator of the African Diaspora, NMAAHC

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### Project Overview:

The [National Museum of African American History and Culture](#) (NMAAHC) has assembled a substantial collection of jewelry designed by Art Smith – a Cuban-born midcentury modernist jeweler who created spectacular sculptural objects in the form of necklaces, bracelets, earrings, brooches, rings, cuff links, and more. Smith’s family and professional history provide multiple ways for the museum to explore the interconnections between Black immigration and African American history and to bring greater visibility to the diversity of Black American identities. Smith’s family migrated from Jamaica in 1912 and worked for eight years as *braceros* in Cuba’s burgeoning and U.S. capitalist-fueled sugar industry before migrating to New York in 1920. Both in Cuba and the United States, Smith’s father would become involved in the development of Marcus Garvey’s United Negro Improvement Agency (UNIA). Smith himself is often tantalizingly noted to have had significant clientele among and relationships with African American artists, dancers, and musicians. Yet these aspects of Art Smith’s personal and professional history and how they influenced his design aesthetics are woefully understudied compared to the volume of information on his participation in the predominantly white studio jewelry movement and how the aesthetic choices undergirding this movement shaped his work.

As part of this practicum, the fellow will be assisting with research and identification of resources related to Art Smith’s personal and professional relationships to and interests in Black cultural expressions. NMAAHC will use this information to flesh out content on Art Smith on our website, add to the biography that will accompany our own Art Smith collections processing, and allows us to determine what connections may exist between Smith and other significant figures in our collection. It will also contribute to a future Art Smith online initiative. This work will involve conducting research in the Art Smith Papers located at the Brooklyn Museum, dance, and music collections located at The Schomburg, and other New York-based archives. This practicum will take place in New York City.

### The practicum will include the following activities:

- Reading and analyzing the existing scholarly research on Art Smith for interconnections to African American leaders, dances, artists, and musicians.
- Researching archival collections in New York City for resources supporting these connections.
- Researching online images and other archival materials within NMAAHC’s collection
- Identifying visual images that may support these connections

● Smithsonian

- Creating a summary report of findings
- Cultivating critical thinking skills about visual and material culture
- Appreciating the work of public and cultural historians in a national museum

**Practicum Goals:**

- Substantiate connections between Black American multidisciplinary artists with primary resources
- Enable the NMAAHC to expand the public knowledge base about a renowned Black artist
- Strengthen connections between collections at the museum

**Practicum may be best suited for students in the areas of:**

African American History, Art History, Decorative Art and Design, American and Caribbean History, Latina/o/x Studies, and American Studies, but all encouraged to apply.

**Festival Link:**

[Art Smith | National Museum of African American History and Culture \(si.edu\)](https://www.si.edu/artsmith)

## National Museum of American History (NMAH)

### *De Ultima Hora: Latinas Report History*

Kathleen Franz, Ph.D., Supervisory Museum Curator, Division of Work & Industry, NMAH

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### **Project Overview:**

The National Museum of American History will open a new exhibition in September of 2023 titled *De Ultima Hora: Latinas Report History*. The temporary exhibition explores the lives and major stories of seven Latina journalists on Spanish-language TV in the United States. These women reported major news stories and advocated for issues important to Latino communities starting in the 1960s.

As part of this practicum, the fellow will be primarily assisting with three necessary projects related to the opening of the exhibition. These would include developing content for the exhibition website, contributing to the exhibition opening event, and supporting the communications plan for the exhibition. This may include social media for the opening that corresponds to the content on the website.

### **The practicum will include the following activities:**

- Researching and creating content for the exhibition website
- Contribute to exhibition opening event
- Supporting communications plan for exhibit opening
- Identifying images, quotes, and media, for use on the website
- Identifying speakers for potential public programs

### **Practicum Goals:**

- Developing research skills related to living donors
- Understanding the contributions of Latina journalists in the history of Spanish-language television
- Gain experience in executing an exhibit opening at a large museum
- Understand the working relationships of different museum departments for events
- Gain understanding of the work of public historians in a national museum.

**Practicum may be best suited for students in the areas of:**

American Studies, Latina/o/x Studies, American Studies, Anthropology, Public History, but all encouraged to apply.

Spanish language skills required.

**Related Project Links:**

[Spanish Language Broadcast History](#)

## **National Museum of American History (NMAH)**

Chronicling *El Movimiento*: An exploration into the Chicano Underground Press

Verónica A. Méndez, Ph.D., Curator, NMAH

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### **Project Overview:**

The National Museum of American History's Division of Military and Political history is developing a project that seeks to document the important contributions of the Chicano movement in the long struggle for Latinx Civil Rights and their imprint on U.S. politics, history, and culture. The division houses a number of Chicano periodicals covering the years from 1970 to 1972.

For social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, underground newspapers were crucial for disseminating information, giving a voice to the community, and building the movement. In support of this project, the LMSP fellow will conduct historical research on the division's Chicano periodical collection.

### **The practicum will include the following activities:**

- Conduct historical research on individual periodicals.
- Maintain and update Chicano newspaper database with historical references and, if available, information on contributors and organizers.
- Produce a bibliography with relevant primary and secondary sources.
- Identify key themes and topics for potential public programming, social media, and digital outreach.

### **Practicum Goals:**

- Hands-on experience working with material culture in a museum setting
- Enhance internal and public-facing records on Latinx political history
- Make accessible Latinx political material

### **Practicum may be best suited for students in the areas of:**

History, Chicanx Studies, American Studies, Latinx Studies, Women and Gender Studies, Ethnic Studies, Comparative Literature, and Library and Information Studies, but all encouraged to apply.

### **Required/preferred skills:**

Strong organizational skills required. Fluent in Spanish preferred.

## National Museum of American History (NMAH)

### *War and Latina/o Philanthropy Collecting Initiative*

Amanda B. Moniz, Ph.D., David M. Rubenstein Curator of Philanthropy

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#### **Project Overview:**

The War and Latina/o Philanthropy Collecting Initiative is a focused effort, supported by the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Latino, to build Latina/o-related holdings in the philanthropy collection at the National Museum of American History. Launched in 2015, the Smithsonian's Philanthropy Initiative is a long-term project to collect, research, document, and display materials relating to the history and impact of American giving, broadly defined--from gifts of time and expertise to social activism and funding. Through onsite and online exhibitions, digital resources, and public programs, the Initiative engages audiences in conversations about the role philanthropy has played and continues to play in the formation and re-formation of our country. This project is the first component of the Philanthropy Initiative dedicated to researching, collecting, and sharing the experiences of Latina/o gifts of time, talent, and treasure to aid others.

Throughout American history, wars have catalyzed changes in philanthropy. Yet there is little historical scholarship on Latina/o philanthropy in the context of wars, and the Museum's holdings reflect this lacuna. This project explores Latina/o philanthropy during and in the aftermath of wars the United States joined formally. It also considers the impact of wars, such as the Mexican Revolution, Colombian civil war, and Central American conflicts, on Latina/o giving. Latinos have a strong and distinct tradition of philanthropy. Informal aid through family and kin networks is an especially important facet of Latinx giving, although Latinos have also supported one another through organizations, including *mutualistas* and churches. The temporal focus will be the period from the 1910s to present, and the geographic focus will be Florida; Texas; and Washington, DC.

In support of this project, the curator of philanthropy seeks a fellow to help advance additional collecting and to make resources on Latina/o philanthropy more accessible to the public in general and to diverse Latino communities, in particular.

#### **The practicum will include the following activities:**

- Researching the history of Latina/o philanthropy to help shape collecting plans, with Afro-Latino stories a particular area of interest;
- Assisting with collecting objects as opportunities allow;
- Researching one or more object in the Museum's collection for display in *Giving in America*;
- Drafting one or more objects labels for *Giving in America*;
- Creating project final report and presentation.

**Practicum Goal:**

To carry out essential tasks that will enable Latina/o philanthropy objects and oral histories to be publicly accessible in support of the Smithsonian's Philanthropy Initiative, National Museum of American History, and National Museum of the American Latino missions.

**Practicum may be best suited for students in the areas of:**

History, American Studies, Latino Studies, African American Studies, but all are encouraged to apply.

Bilingual skills required and a background in history preferred.

## National Museum of American History (NMAH)

*Latinx Health, History, and Sexuality*

[Katherine Ott, Ph.D.](#), Curator, NMAH

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### **Project Overview:**

Supporting the division of [History of Medicine and Science](#) at the National Museum of American History, this project builds upon the division's on-going collecting and documentation related to the history of health, the body, and sexuality in Latinx communities. This practicum will have a particular focus on the dynamics of sexual orientation/gender identity (SOGI) related to the history of shifting understandings across Latinx cultures in the United States.

The Division manages the largest and most significant collection of health-related artifacts in the Western Hemisphere. The Collections in medical science seek to capture the historical experiences of researchers, physicians, communities, patients, and their families. Because our materials related to sexuality, health, and Latinx history are rudimentary, this practicum is designed to build on the existing base and expand the categories for collecting.

### **The practicum will include the following activities:**

- Research on one or more of the following related topics:
  - Queer Latinx identities starting in the mid-1800s;
  - The intersectionality of disability and SOGI (including diagnosis, treatment, physical impairment, madness, neuro-diversity, and “invisible” disabilities);
  - HIV and AIDS and Latinx experience.
- Identify and evaluate resources at NMAH and elsewhere including:
  - Objects
  - Suggested primary and secondary materials
  - Archives and other existing collections
  - Key historical people and events
  - Media, and similar
- Create an annotated collecting guide on a specific issue that includes collecting sources and bibliographic references where appropriate.
- Project final report and presentation



**Practicum Goals:**

- Enhance the museum's standing collections and guide future collecting related to Latinx sexuality and health.
- Provide understanding of the basics of museum collecting, object-based research, and interpretation.

**Practicum may be best suited for students in the areas of:**

Women and Gender Studies, Latina/o/x Studies, History, Creative Arts, American Studies, Anthropology, Medicine, Psychology, Sociology, but all are encouraged to apply.

## National Museum of the American Latino (NMAL)

*Latinos in the 21st Century: A Digital Experience for All*

José Ralat-Reyes, Digital Media Specialist, NMAL

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### Project Overview:

The National Museum of the American Latino (NMAL) opened the Molina Family Latino Gallery and its first exhibition *¡Presente! A Latino History of the United States* at the National Museum of American History on June 18, 2022. This 4,500sf gallery is the first Smithsonian space on the National Mall dedicated to the experience of Latinos and Latinas in the United States. This gallery and exhibition space is currently intended for a ten+ year run.

NMAL celebrates the artistic and scientific achievements of Latinos and Latinas and ensures that their contributions to the country are shared throughout the Smithsonian. By taking advantage of the Smithsonian's vast network of museums and research centers, NMAL offers diverse cultural programs ranging from exhibits and family activities on the National Mall to symposia and cultural celebrations in its digital online initiatives.

Previously, as the Smithsonian Latino Center (SLC), staff pioneered methods to dynamically represent Latino content digitally through its Smithsonian Latino Virtual Museum (LVM). In 2014-2018, supported by five Target Education Grants, the momentum and opportunity to produce and disseminate relevant bilingual educational online experiences resulted in a transmedia museum model for representing and accessing the vast Latino collections, scholarship, and educational resources through a digital storytelling hub.

Now, as we build a new national museum, we have been scaling-up our digital strategic plan for engaging audiences, both in-gallery and online, by connecting to in-gallery immersion strategies and leveraging existing infrastructure and resources into a larger Smithsonian-wide digital framework targeting diverse Latino audiences and the general public.

Join the NMAL Digital Initiatives Team and other internal and external experts in the process of implementing innovative digital storytelling strategies to support the museum's commitment to inclusive design and to telling radically inclusive, impactful, and meaningful stories. This year's practicum will focus on collaboratively developing an online exhibition focused on the experiences and realities of the Latino disability community. A teaser for this online exhibition is slated to launch during this year's Disability Pride Month (July 2023). The full virtual exhibition will launch during Hispanic Heritage Month on the museum's website and/or external online content platforms such as Google Arts and Culture.

Participate, learn, and contribute within a dynamic team environment implementing digital humanities skill sets that support multiple workflows in various overlapping categories/departments such as digital asset management, digital curation, audience engagement studies, inclusive design, marketing and communications, advancement, and digitization strategic planning/implementation as it relates to Smithsonian's goal and objectives for a digital first strategy to reach a billion visitors per year.

This endeavor includes digital activities such as digitizing collections; ensuring thoughtful stewardship of digital assets and defining long-term management to enable preservation of and access to our digital collections well into the future.

**The practicum will include the following activities:**

- Collaboratively developing an online exhibition focused on the experiences and realities of the Latino disability community
- Develop skills and hands on experiences in the areas of digital curation, digital asset management, website development, and online storytelling
- Develop digital humanities skill sets
- Learn about multiple workflows in various overlapping categories/departments such as digital asset management, digital curation, audience engagement studies, inclusive design, marketing and communications, advancement, and digitization strategic planning/implementation

**Practicum Goals:**

- Implementing innovative digital storytelling strategies
- Learn about virtual exhibitions
- Gain understanding of Google Arts and Culture

**Practicum may be best suited for students in the areas of:**

Digital Humanities, Library and Information Science, Latino/a/x Studies, Cultural Studies, Interdisciplinary Studies, Digital Arts, Emerging Media, Audience Engagement and Accessibility, Marketing and Design, but all are encouraged to apply.

**Related Project Links:**

[Molina Family Latino Gallery](#)

## Smithsonian Libraries and Archives (SLA)

### *Discovering the Smithsonian Libraries and Archives' Latino Collections and Services*

Nilda Lopez, Reference Librarian, SLA

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#### **Project Overview:**

Smithsonian Libraries and Archives play a key role in supporting the Smithsonian's research and curatorial staff as they explore and highlight the museums' almost innumerable, often unique, objects and their cultural and historical contexts. The network of specialized Library Research Centers provides the Institution with resources and services that are as diverse and deep as the collections, exhibits, and scholarly work they support. Spanning the range of scientific and cultural pursuits of humanity from aerospace, anthropology, and art history to business history and botany, cultural history, design, philately, zoology, and beyond.

While sharing the values, methods, and efficiencies of a unified network, each library in the system supports the work of its own community and scholarship, comprising specialized researchers and museum curators, as well as visiting scholars, educators, students, and others pursuing or advancing knowledge in their fields.

Via this practicum, Smithsonian Libraries and Archives seeks to directly support the research of the Latino community at SI and the curatorial and education departments of the National Museum of the American Latino (NMAL). NMAL states that "the new museum will be the cornerstone for visitors to learn how Latinos have contributed and continue to contribute to U.S. art, history, culture, and science." SLA strives to continue providing consistent support to NMAL, one of many units of the Smithsonian which are not directly served by the traditional model of the existing Library Research Center Structure.

A stronger collaborative effort is needed with NMAL and SLA staff about the research areas and focus of this interdisciplinary topic, which will better assist in providing accurate evaluation of collections and services based on these needs, the practicum student(s) will provide a Research Guide and make recommendations for highlighting and finding interdisciplinary research at SLA for SI researchers.

#### **The practicum will include the following activities:**

- Onsite visits to Library Research Centers in DC and NYC to evaluate print collections supporting Latino/x/e research
- Explore collections and develop a discovery guide focused on Latino scholarship and research to highlight interdisciplinary resources at SLA
- Produce Research Guide, final report and presentation

**Practicum Goals:**

- To conduct a collections and services discovery resource guide to the Smithsonian Libraries and Archives,
- To highlighting current subscriptions and collections items to better support the National Museum of the American Latino and Latino studies across the Smithsonian.

**Practicum may be best suited for students in the areas of:**

Library and Information Science, Museum Studies, Latino/a/x Studies, Education and Outreach, but all are encouraged to apply.

Bilingual skills required and a background in library sciences preferred.

**Related Project Links:**

[Smithsonian Libraries and Archives](#)