University of Florida (UF) and Duke University researchers and librarians have spearheaded a collaborative partnership project that has been awarded $240,804 from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Archive of Haitian Religion and Culture: Collaborative Research and Scholarship on Haiti and the Haitian Diaspora grant, led by project director Benjamin Hebblethwaite (UF) and codirector Laurent Dubois (Duke University), will improve the understanding of a central Haitian and Haitian-American spiritual tradition, the Vodou religion, by gathering audiovisual and textual sources of communities, interpreting collected materials, expanding holdings through a self-submission tool, and diffusing knowledge via an open access digital library hosted within the existing Digital Library of the Caribbean (dLOC, www.dloc.com). Partnering with the researchers are the UF George A. Smathers Libraries, the technical host for dLOC.

The University of Florida (UF) Isser and Rae Price Library of Judaica at the George A. Smathers Libraries, in partnership with the Jewish Museum of Florida and three Florida county public libraries’ systems (Miami-Dade County, Broward County, and Palm Beach County), will broaden access to the Florida Digital Newspaper Library (FDNL) through an award of $21,753 from the State Archives of Florida. FDNL is a key resource for research, comprising 730 Florida newspaper titles and more than 1 million pages of information. Primarily, project funds will support the conversion of 127 reels of The Jewish Floridian from microfilm to digital format, and these will become accessible through the FDNL, hosted by the UF Digital Collections.

Acquisitions

The Special Collections and Archives of the Coates Library at Trinity University recently acquired the Claude and ZerNona Black Papers, donated in October 2011 by Taj I. Matthews, the Blacks’ grandson. Reverend Claude William Black Jr. and his wife ZerNona Stewart Black played key roles in the civil rights movement in San Antonio, Texas. The 100-cubic-foot collection documents their tireless community action in the arenas of church, social programs, municipal government, and in the eventual desegregation and integration of the City of San Antonio. The collection is an important contribution to the generally few African American civil rights collections of its size in the Southwest United States. Black preached many years as minister of Mount Zion First Baptist Church, and served as a City of San Antonio city councilman and the first African American mayor pro tem. Reverend Black was a correspondent with Martin Luther King Jr., and A. Philip Randolph, and was sought out for participation on a national level by Presidents Lyndon Baines Johnson and William Jefferson Clinton. ZerNona Black was assigned in 1943 to run the San Antonio USO for African Americans. The collection reveals ZerNona Black’s leading roles in the various church missions, eldercare programs, education, and as “First Lady” of the church. The collection, in the initial stages of processing, includes writings, records of church and service organizations, audiovisual media, scrapbooks, photographs, ephemera, correspondence, and local African American newspapers document the lesser-known history of African Americans in San Antonio. An initial glimpse into the collection can be seen by visiting the Special Collections and Archives blog at http://archivestrinity.blogspot.com/.