Meet Our New Students!

**Suzi Decker:** B.S. in Fisheries and Wildlife from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln

**Rebecca Dickman:** B.S. in History and Sociology from Iowa State University

**Brecken Liebl:** B.S. in Journalism, a B.A. in Anthropology, and a minor in Business from University of Kansas

**Brittney Oleniacz:** B.S. in Geology and a B.A. in Individual Studies (Biology) from Edinboro University

**Jamie Rees:** B.A. in Classical Archaeology and a minor in Anthropology from the University of Missouri-Columbia

**Ryan Ridder:** B.S. in Biochemistry and a minor in Mathematics from Wichita State University

**Kayle Rieger:** B.A. in Art and minors in Biology, Museum Studies, and Psychology from Aurora University

**Megan Sims:** B.S. in Biology and a minor in Music from Centre College

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**Director’s Note**

**Dr. Peter H. Welsh**

The new year has gotten off to a great start. The best news is that Dr. Sandra Olsen has joined our faculty. Dr. Olsen was curator of archaeology and Division Head at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh, PA. for over 20 years, and has extraordinary experience with exhibitions and collections management. Her academic specialty is zooarchaeology, and she has focused much of her career on the investigation of horse domestication, directing excavations of Copper Age sites and doing research in Kazakhstan. She co-curated the major travelling exhibition The Horse, organized by the American Museum of Natural History as well as A Gift from the Desert: The Art, History and Culture of the Arabian Horse at the International Museum of the Horse. In recent years, she has turned to advanced imaging of petroglyphs in Saudi Arabia, with particular interest in the impact of climate change on the Arabian Peninsula. We are extremely fortunate that Dr. Olsen has joined us to help the program grow.
First Year Perspectives: MPMA & KMA

**MPMA**
**By Jamie Rees**

Amongst the flood of emails in my inbox at the start of the school year, one stood out: an invitation to the Mountain Plains Museum Association’s 2014 conference. Though I was preoccupied with moving to Lawrence and getting situated at KU, I decided to go. Here are my top 3 reasons why it was an excellent decision:

- Meeting People: whether it was chatting with actual museum professionals, other emerging museum professionals, or KU classmates
- Hearing the latest research and ideas from the field
- Getting to travel to Aspen!

Though intimidating at first, I credit this experience with kick-starting my first semester in the Museum Studies program.

**KMA**
**By Kayle Reiger**

My overall experience at the Kansas Museum Association annual conference this November revolved around one theme: engagement. The sessions I attended underscored a museum’s need to engage funders, teachers, and visitors, as well as to effectively engage with technology. A session of four panelists from funding agencies such as the Kansas Humanities Council introduced various funding options available to cultural institutions and offered tips on successfully applying for grants and other funding opportunities. “The iPad in the Room: Museums, Technology and Visitor Engagement” brought together the struggles and successes of three museum professionals—a director, a curator, and the Spencer Museum of Art’s own Director of Education, Kristina Walker—on journeys of implementing technology in the museum setting. A great note by one presenter was that technology should be used in an “authentic” way; it must effectively complement and enhance the exhibit content, not be “gimmicky” or a distraction. Celia Daniels, an independent museum educator, gave an interactive talk about tips to engage and encourage teachers to attend workshops and build relationships between classroom and museum. The conference ended for me with a lively retelling of her gallery’s transformation by Zan Popp of the Sabatini Gallery. She outlined several changes the unique gallery took on in order to reach their audience better, and they had fantastic results! I found all four sessions to be enlightening and it is exciting to see cultural institutions finding new ways of engaging with our changing world. I look forward to attending the joint KMA/MPMA conference in Wichita next year!
This year’s Mountain Plains Museum Association Conference was set in stunning Snowmass and Aspen, Colorado, and hosted museum professionals from North Dakota all the way to Texas. The second years were off to a great start with four of the students presenting at the conference. Katie Manley and Erik Radowski presented posters at the conference, and both posters were a visual hit. JoJo Palko and Alissa Meehan gave a formal session, entitled: Bridging the Gap. The session focused on after school programs and accessibility for students with learning disabilities in a museum setting. The session was well-attended and great discussion followed. All in all, MPMA was a great way for all the students to engage in discussion, collaborate, network, and even get in a quick hike!

Meet Ashley Tso, Museum Studies Program Coordinator

Ashley Tso joined the Museum Studies Program as the Program Coordinator on March 30, 2014. Ashley also serves as the Coordinator for the Indigenous Studies Program. For her job, she does a lot of administrative activities, such as creating timetables for when classes will be offered and keeping instructor information up to date. She also recruits and communicates with prospective students. Ashley grew up in a suburb of Salt Lake City, UT. Her family is from Lukachukai, AZ, on the Navajo Indian Reservation. She lived in Colorado Springs, CO for two years before moving to Lawrence. She received her associate degree (A.A.) in Social Work and a B.A. in Indigenous and Native American Studies from Haskell Indian Nations University. She graduated with a M.S.E. in Education: Higher Education Administration with an emphasis in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from KU in May 2014. Currently she is the secretary for the Native American Faculty & Staff Council and serves as an ambassador for the Center of Sustainability. Ashley is an advisor for the First Nations Student Association and the Hispanic American Leadership Organization, plus a co-advisor for the Graduate Students of Color Organization. Ashley’s dream job is to teach entry-level courses at a university. She enjoys working with undergraduate students and connecting them with others. In her free time, Ashley loves to read, do yoga, play Words with Friends, bead, drink coffee, and play with her dog, Sunshine.
Second Year Internships

Jojo Palko: Archives Intern at the University Archives

For my Museum Studies internship I stayed close to home, working at the University Archives as their summer intern. The University Archives is the repository for the records documenting the history of the University of Kansas. My duties and projects revolved around the Sesquicentennial of the University, a celebration that will begin in the fall of 2015. A major component of the celebration in regards to the archives is to digitize relevant material: photographs, documents and publications. For me that meant entering the metadata of over 250 photographs that will be published in Toward the Blue, a book written on the last 50 years of the university’s history. My main project though consisted of an entire reorganization of the archive’s artifact collection of over 600 objects. About 150 new artifacts were added to the collection, all of which had to be correctly identified by record group, boxed and labeled. My experience provided me with real-world knowledge and skills as well as a basis for my final Master thesis on archival practices and public memory.

Erik Radowski: Exhibitions Intern at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum

When I first arrived at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum in Grand Rapids, Michigan, I was expecting a summer of working with a presidential collection, and contributing to some collections management projects. While I did participate in some, they did not become the focus of my internship. The advertised collections internship transformed into an exhibits internship. I participated in the installation of a major temporary exhibition on the history of the American Aircraft Carrier. Through this exhibition, I had the opportunity to work with some amazing naval artifacts like Jimmy Doolittle’s Congressional Medal of Honor and a hand-drawn map of Pearl Harbor created by the lead Japanese pilot. My main project for the summer, though, was to create an exhibit that would commemorate the 40th anniversary of President Ford’s swearing-in as President. I had a really great experience this summer, met some important contacts for my future career, and garnered valuable insights on the operations of a national museum.
Discoveries at the St. Joseph Museums
by Katie Manley

In August of this year I began working with the Harry L George Collection at the St. Joseph Museums in St. Joe, Missouri. This collection consists of approximately 4,000 Native American objects, two large ledger books of correspondence, 200+ books, and photographs all collected at the turn of the century. Not only are the some of the artifact pieces truly spectacular, but the correspondence in the ledger books is a unique treasure.

Scrolling through the pages, I find myself getting caught up in the daily life of a serious collector. Collecting Native artifacts skyrocketed at the turn of the century with the notion of the “vanishing Indian.” Harry George hopped on this bandwagon and collected pieces from all over the United States. Although Harry George was collecting objects during his business travels, the ledgers lead me in understanding his relationship with major dealers and other collectors of the time. There are over 400 pages filled with letters, telegrams, drawings, catalogs, and invoices—all with something to offer in understanding Native collecting at this time.

Harry George was corresponding with people like George Heye, Grace Nicholson, and Herman Schweizer. Heye and his 800,000+ collection went on to become the National Museum of the American Indian.

Grace Nicholson was famous for her basket collection and collecting trips along the West Coast. Herman Schweizer was the buyer for the Indian Department of the Fred Harvey Company. Harry George was corresponding with all of these larger name individuals about his collection and making transactions for new materials.

Along with the big names, what has been most interesting is researching and getting to know the names of individuals and companies not as well known. Dealers from Wisconsin and Wyoming to Alaska and Washington were selling Harry George Native materials. Many of these dealers had other businesses by trade, but added “Indian Relics” or “Curios” to their letterhead adjacent to their furniture or shoe company.

The next step for this collection is to work on digitization. In the spring I, along with several volunteers, will set up a little camera studio to take pictures of every page. From there, researchers will be able to access this material without tearing up the ledger pages! It is our goal through this project to make an unknown collection known. This collection and the accompanying ledgers have been tucked away and it has been wonderful to research this unique collection as well as getting the public excited about it and preserving it for the future.
HAPPY NEW YEAR