

**KCAA Spring Mixer, Co-Hosted with the Heritage League of Greater Kansas City
May 19, 2021**

Andrew Gustafson, President of the Heritage League of Greater Kansas City, began the meeting at 5:04 PM. He introduced the Heritage League's officers and explained the format of the virtual meeting. A lightning round panel will discuss working and collaborating with historically underrepresented communities and will be followed by small group discussions in breakout rooms.

Guest Speaker: Dr. Holly Zane, Associate Director at Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area
Holly discussed the importance of involving Native American tribes in historical work and ensuring that they are accurately represented in collections and exhibits. She encouraged attendees to group indigenous artifacts according to geographic area rather than with similar artifacts, as these artifacts can come from vastly different indigenous groups. Holly also emphasized land acknowledgements, accurate references to tribes, using disclaimers if primary sources contain insensitive or offensive language, and including indigenous descriptions of artifacts. Lastly, she encouraged attendees to reach out to tribal members to review current or planned exhibits and provided resources on representing Native American perspectives.

Guest Speaker: Jessica Shields, Graduate Assistant at Emporia State University
Jessica talked about Emporia State University's efforts to preserve stories related to Emporia's historically Black neighborhood, Stringtown. In the late 1990s, a group of Black residents began collecting oral histories from their community and in 2001 published these histories as *Black Emporia: The African American Experience Through the Lives of Emporians*. After these materials were donated to the university, staff expanded the collection by digitally collecting oral histories of those involved with the project and other Stringtown residents. These oral histories will be made available on YouTube. Jessica and her colleagues have also updated their institution's catalogs, website, and held virtual Black History Month programs focusing on Black educators and significant events impacting Black education.

Guest Speaker: Stuart Hinds, Curator of Special Collections and Archives, LaBudde Special Collections, University of Missouri-Kansas City
Stuart shared the successes of UMKC's collecting initiative known as the Gay and Lesbian Archive of Mid-America (GLAMA). The initiative has successfully connected with the local LGBTQ community by focusing its interpretation on personal stories. A traveling exhibit about pre-Stonewall activism will even be included in the upcoming bicentennial celebration at the Missouri State Museum. GLAMA's resonance with the LGBTQ community has been evident in organizations and individuals reaching out to the university to donate materials. Stuart added that these efforts are particularly urgent today as four states currently prohibit the teaching of LGBTQ history with another two states set to pass similar legislation.

Guest Speaker: Dr. Anthony LaBat, Senior Library Information Specialist, LaBudde Special Collections, University of Missouri-Kansas City
Anthony discussed the restorative archival work of LaBudde Special Collections staff on the exhibit "April 1968: The Battle Between Us." After reexamining the language used in the exhibit, as well as the collection's metadata and finding aids, it was rereleased electronically as "Eight Days in April: The Story of the 1968 Uprising in Kansas City." The community's response to the redesign has been very positive and UMKC staff are now working on ways to further incorporate this feedback. Throughout his presentation, Anthony emphasized the importance of word choice in archival work. As part of the online

exhibit, attendees are asked what they believe the events of 1968 should be called. This helps ensure that the archive accurately reflects its community.

Guest Speaker: Anne Jones, Curator of Collections, Johnson County Museum

Anne shared her institution's work on reaching out to traditionally underrepresented communities, particularly the Latino community, in Johnson County. She discussed the difficulties of building trust and convincing community members that their family stories deserve to be told. The Museum's emphasis on establishing long-term relationships rather than acquisitions has led to the identification and fuller biographical descriptions of numerous individuals within their existing photograph collection. This in turn allowed the organization to showcase these individuals in social media posts for Hispanic Heritage Month. Anne also discussed the importance of updating collection descriptions to better highlight specific communities and make them more easily accessible to researchers.

Guest Speaker: Gene Chavez, President of Chavez and Associates

Gene spoke of his work as a member of an advisory committee formed by the Kansas City Museum to improve the representation of the Latino community in its exhibit. Thanks to the committee's work, the Museum now includes information on Mexican baseball players, who were not allowed to play on segregated company teams, as well as Mexican musicians. The Wyandotte County Historical Society has likewise made great progress in its representation of and outreach to the Latino community. Gene mentioned the need to allocate funds to these advisory committees to show that their time and efforts are being valued.

Attendees then separated into breakout rooms to discuss their own institutions' diversity and inclusion efforts.

The meeting ended at 6:27 PM.