



# Special Collections Endowment

## UTSA Libraries

### OVERVIEW

The University of Texas at San Antonio Libraries Special Collections preserves and provides access to distinctive archival, photographic, and printed materials, with a particular commitment to collections documenting the history of the University and the diverse histories and development of San Antonio and South Texas. Special Collections allows the university to maintain its R1 Carnegie Classification by building nationally recognized collections that inspire new knowledge, serving researchers at UTSA and from around the world. The collections are housed in two locations: the John Peace Library (JPL) and the Institute of Texan Cultures (ITC). UTSA Libraries Special Collections serves an average of 700 patrons per year and virtual services are provided via email to an average of 65 researchers per month.



### CHALLENGE

UTSA's Special Collections' archives and rare books are stored in secure, climate-controlled facilities to ensure their safety and preservation. These collections are available for reading room use by students, faculty, researchers, and the community. To reduce barriers to access, Special Collections digitizes and provides free online access to its material. While Special Collections can only provide online access to a small fraction of its total holdings, they are committed to selecting material for digitization that will increase the availability of the most heavily used collections, promoting those with high research value and aiding in reducing wear and tear to the most fragile collections. Special Collections currently has over 42,000 digitized items online from more than 25 different collections, with more are added annually.

One of the indicators of a great public research university is the caliber of its special collections. They are resources that differentiate top-tier research libraries and attract scholars from around the

world. Special Collections strives to shatter the perception that archives and rare books are only for serious scholars by developing programs to introduce UTSA students to primary source material and provide them with opportunities to use the collection in course assignments. It is also committed to bringing the collections to the community through outreach events, pop-up exhibits, and other opportunities.

Acquiring, preserving, providing access to, and digitizing Special Collections takes considerable staff and resources. Acquiring rare collections with high historical and research value can be costly. Making collections accessible means they must first be processed, organized, and inventoried. Preservation requires environmental controls, specialized supplies, and—for particularly rare and fragile items—conservation treatment and digitization. The primary challenge is the need for more resources and staffing to build, preserve, and provide access to these distinctive materials as the collections continue to grow.

## IMPACT

**Special Collections Endowments** will strengthen efforts to build distinctive collections, maintain the university's R1 Carnegie Classification, increase educational opportunities, and preserve the history of San Antonio and South Texas. The strengths of UTSA's Special Collections include Mexican Culinary History and Cookbooks, Women's History, Activists/Activism, African American community, Mexican American community, and Urban Development & Growth.

An acquisitions endowment will allow UTSA to continue building distinctive collections and facilitate the ability to act quickly to purchase a highly desirable or rare collection as soon as it is available on the market.

A preservation endowment will provide resources for specialized archival supplies and conservation work of rare books, such as those in the Mexican Cookbook Collection. Cookbooks by nature are heavily used and consulted throughout their lifetime, so it is not unusual that some of the older volumes in the collection need treatment. Preservation and conservation of rare books requires outsourcing to a trained conservationist.

A processing endowment will support the efficient processing of archival collections. Processing requires a trained and experienced professional archivist who will evaluate each collection, arrange and describe the contents, and create inventories to provide discovery and access. A processing archivist at UTSA will address the needs of a rapidly growing collection and ensure new resources can be made accessible in a timely manner for research and teaching.

A digitization endowment will support state-of-the-art technology and staff support to expand the digitization program. Currently, the program has minimal capacity to digitize at-risk items such as reel-to-reel, Umatic, Betacam, and other obsolete audiovisual formats. Specialized equipment and the expertise of an audiovisual archivist will allow Special Collections to preserve and provide access to material in danger of irreversible degradation.

An instruction endowment will support the Special Collections Faculty Teaching in the Archives (FTIA) grant program. FTIA grants encourage faculty to design undergraduate or graduate courses, utilizing unique content from Special Collections and generate innovative primary source assignments and projects for students.

## PHILANTHROPIC OPPORTUNITIES

The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) has launched a comprehensive campaign to support UTSA's 10-Year-Strategic Vision introduced by President Taylor Eighmy in 2017. **Be Bold: A Campaign for Our Future**, which also extends 10 years and has a working goal of \$500 million, is focused on providing the infrastructure and resources needed to become a model for student success and research discovery.

**Endowments** help foster excellence in research and support high-quality teaching and learning. The University of Texas at San Antonio also welcomes the opportunity to discuss a naming opportunity that can provide support beyond bricks and mortar. Supporting a naming opportunity can allow for major academic and programmatic transformations that will elevate UTSA to greater levels of excellence and increase its competitiveness on a global scale. Below are opportunities to support UTSA Libraries Special Collections:

- The UTSA Libraries Endowment for Special Collections
- The Expansion of Special Collections Digitization
- The Naming of the Special Collections Digitization Lab
- The Special Collections Archival Process
- The Endowment for Distinctive Collections
- The Acquiring Distinctive Collections Process
- The Faculty Teaching in the Archives (FTIA) Grant

UTSA also has multiple avenues available to make an incredible impact. Gifts made annually can provide scholarship, research, and programmatic support across all areas. Gifts made through certain assets also have many benefits and include stock, IRAs, donor advised funds, real estate, life insurance, intellectual property, collectibles, matching gifts, in-kind gifts, estate gifts, and more.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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