

## Updates on Ongoing Projects Funded by the Friends *As of February 6, 2026*

### **PACE Grant for Texas A&M University Sesquicentennial Student Researcher I**

**Funding Schedule:** \$7,260 by December 12, 2025; \$4,620 by August 31, 2026

To date, a total of \$5,774.13 has been spent on student wages. The original FY 2025 request was \$7,260, leaving \$1,485.87 in unspent funds.

There have been no substantive updates to report since the last status report, which was submitted in conjunction with the request for payment on December 12, 2025. Work supported by the Texas A&M University Sesquicentennial Student Researcher PACE Grant is continuing as previously described, with student labor focused on archival research in Cushing Memorial Library & Archives in support of Texas A&M University's sesquicentennial initiatives.

### **PACE Grant for Texas A&M University Sesquicentennial Student Researcher II**

**Funding Schedule:** \$3,300 by December 12, 2025; \$9,724 by August 31, 2026

A total of \$1,359.83 has been spent on student wages for the Fall semester.

We hired Jvk Chaitanya in early November 2025 as a Student Technician to help organize and enhance digital collections from the University Archives and Sesquicentennial projects. Jvk's work has proven highly relevant to the Sesquicentennial initiatives. His responsibilities include updating and improving information that makes digital items easier to locate online. Using AI tools, he generates transcripts, identifies speakers, and adds captions for recorded interviews and oral histories. He also writes and refines computer code to improve AI accuracy and performance. In addition, he assists with uploading, migrating, and cleaning up digital files to ensure all materials are well-organized and accessible.

We are also in the process of hiring another Student Technician who will perform many of the same tasks as Jvk but with a stronger focus on large-scale data migration. This effort will move the Libraries' and Archives' digital collections to updated, more accessible platforms, improving public access and ensuring continued compliance with ADA standards. Generally, student hiring does not occur at this time of year since student schedules are already set; however, we are proceeding due to the importance and time-sensitive nature of this project. The position is expected to begin soon, with an anticipated rate of \$11.50 per hour for approximately 20 hours per week through August 2026. These figures are projected and will be updated once the student has been hired, and work begins in support of the Libraries' Sesquicentennial digital initiatives.

## **PACE Grant for Texas A&M University Sesquicentennial Coffee Table Book**

**Funding Schedule:** \$75,000 due late April/early May

Work on the Texas A&M University Sesquicentennial pictorial coffee table book is ongoing. The manuscript is currently in the copyediting stage, and as a result, PACE Grant funds have not yet been utilized. Expenditures are anticipated later in the project timeline, once the book advances into the design and production phases.

At this stage, the authors are finalizing key editorial and design components. Two images are pending delivery to the editor for inclusion in the manuscript. Concurrently, the authors are working to finalize the book's title and develop the cover art concept. To support this phase of the project, the authors are enlisting the assistance of the University's Marketing and Communications (MarCom) team for guidance on title development and cover design.

All project activities are proceeding as planned, and spending will commence once the design phase begins.

## **Audio/Visual/Film Inventory Student Assistant Project – Digitization Component**

**Funding Source:** \$21,000 (\$20,000 for student wages and \$1,000 for supplies and equipment)

The remaining balance of \$2,371.63 from this project's budget was approved by the Friends on July 25, 2025, to use for the digitization of the films.

The balance will be combined with outside funding to support the digitization of the films that were identified and assessed during this inventory project. This combined funding strategy will ensure the longevity and accessibility of these historical moving-image assets.

## **Friends Preservation Assistance Fund**

**Total Remaining:** \$40,108 (Preservation has spent \$2,092 since the November 2025 report of \$42,200.)

The Texas A&M Center for Heritage Conservation (CHC)\* project has been completed. Libraries student employees assisted with the digitization of the collection. Their wages were funded by the Friends Preservation Assistance Fund.

This collection arrived at the Libraries in June. The CHC collection documents conservation work on Texas buildings from the 1970s through the 1990s. The items have been quarantined, treated, and rehoused in their entirety.

\*Part of the College of Architecture