

2004 LSTA Final Report: IE-04-55

1.E Access to Special Collections—Phase II
Partnership Among South Carolina Academic Libraries (PASCAL)
28 September 2005

Narrative:

Summary of overall purpose of the project:

In 2004, PASCAL received a LSTA grant intended to capitalize on the success of the 2003 LSTA grant and continue the process of developing skills and relationships necessary to build a statewide digital library. The goals of the 2004 LSTA grant were to develop a central presence for the South Carolina Digital Library and to continue the process of planning and education. The broad goal of a central presence is twofold: the central presence will consist of both a gateway to existing collections and a collaborative thematic exhibition drawing on collections from around the state. While many of the benefits of the grant were directed toward librarians and archivists in the state, the 2004 LSTA grant began to open these benefits to the scholars and life-long learners who will make use of the South Carolina Digital Library.

Project Activities/Methods:

Objective 1.a. **Build a gateway to existing digital collections in South Carolina.**

The foundation for the gateway to digital collections was laid with the 2003 LSTA grant PASCAL received, from which we acquired a server with which to host a database of projects and a pilot collaborative project. During the 2004 LSTA grant we have built the framework for this gateway. The name, "South Carolina Memory," was chosen by library representatives from around the state, and intended to capitalize on the Library of Congress' successful destination, "American Memory." South Carolina Memory (<http://www.scmemory.org/>) will serve as a destination for scholars and the general public seeking digital library and museum materials related to the cultural heritage of our state. The site provides both thematic access and a search interface intended to be "friendly" to both casual and professional visitors. Data for the project listings that make up this directory were gathered via a statewide survey conducted in 2004, via information provided by digital library practitioners in the state, and by ongoing mining. South Carolina Memory is live and open to the public now. We intend to continue to populate the listings as we learn of new projects as an ongoing activity in PASCAL operations.

Objective 1.b. **Create a small thematic collection of images, possibly from the South Carolina Works Progress Administration (WPA), in collaboration with institutions around the state for inclusion in the South Carolina Digital Library.**

While the WPA project was the focus of discussions whilst writing the 2004 LSTA grant application, PASCAL's Digital Collections Committee chose to pursue a project related to South Carolina's role in the American Revolution. In part this was due the readiness of institutional partners to pursue the topic. The result, "South Carolina in the American Revolution" can now be found live online at <http://www.scmemory.org/SCAR/scar.html>. The "final product," which we intend to expand in future development phases, is built around metadata and high quality images derived from collections at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History and the University of South Carolina's South Caroliniana Library. Content is presented in an exhibit format, but is also searchable, via an application developed using the Greenstone Digital Library software, an open-source suite for building and distributing digital library collections. In addition to these primary sources, we have included a reading or resource list prepared by an historian and aimed at all levels of readers, and an introductory essay provided in cooperation with the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. PASCAL also has an additional essay by an historian from Clemson University to add to the project pending final editing. PASCAL intends to expand the project by soliciting materials for incorporation from additional institutions, pursuing additional contextual materials and developing a fully integrated database-to-web presentation with partners such as USC's library school, and public history program, and other institutions. The principal vehicle for these enhancements would be through internship and experiential student project opportunities.

Objective 2.1. Determine further needs for the South Carolina Digital Library.

PASCAL's Digital Collections Committee identified an additional major need during the course of this grant year. Scholars and other users need a portal, and that is provided in "South Carolina Memory." However, this resource does not answer the needs of those digital library practitioners who create the materials that go into South Carolina Memory. Thus, we are using the name, "South Carolina Digital Library," to apply to a set of resources to guide the creation, maintenance, and use of digital objects. The South Carolina Digital Library (<http://www.digilibsc.org/>) will provide guidelines, policies, recommendations, procedures, and best practices to guide the development of digital library projects throughout the state.

Objective 2.b. Build upon existing vision plans for the South Carolina Digital Library.

When the 2004 LSTA grant application was written, the vision plans for the South Carolina Digital Library were draft statements prepared by members of the Digital Collections Committee. Since that time, more complete versions of a mission statement, strategic vision, and collection statement have been drafted by PASCAL. In September, 2005, the Digital Collections Coordinator prepared a vision document, "Pathway to a Program," outlining factors in sustainability of a digital library program. This document will help to guide program developments

toward a dependable and sustainable future, and will serve as a point of departure for the follow-on LSTA grant for 2005-6.

Objective 2.c. Prepare to apply for February 2005 IMLS grant or other major grant.

Members of the PASCAL Digital Collections Committee wrote and submitted a 2005 IMLS grant application for a project digitizing pamphlets from South Carolina collections relating to the nullification crisis. PASCAL received notice that the grant was not awarded in September 2005. We received some excellent feedback from IMLS's review committee on our application and are eager to use some of those suggestions in going forward to seek funding from other sources for this and other projects. Subsequent digital library proposals will be greatly strengthened through this experience.

Objective 2.d. Encourage and support continuing education in the creation and management of digital libraries.

In 2005 the Council on Library and Information Resources hosted a conference on digital asset management in Charleston, SC. PASCAL purchased registration to the conference with 2004 LSTA funds and awarded seats to individuals from institutions around the state. Attendees included two school media specialists, four county public librarians, and fourteen librarians and archivists from public and private colleges and universities (please see appendix for participating institutions). Funding this participation was intended to develop the digital library knowledge base in South Carolina, developing the ability for institutions to carry out independent and collaborative digitization projects. An additional goal was begin building a broad-based community of interest reaching beyond the academic community.

Description of Project Results:

Project Outcomes: In the course of this grant period, PASCAL has completed several excellent, highly visible projects that will raise awareness of existing resources and encourage the creation of more high quality resources. These projects lay solid structural and interpersonal foundations necessary to vigorously pursue the outreach efforts planned for the FY 2005-6 grant. Librarians in many institutions made important professional connections and gained practical experience through the grant's training component and the planning and execution of a multi-institutional project. PASCAL also acquired significant professional expertise on the staff level, and learned many lessons necessary to expand its operational activities. In terms of project-planning, the greatest lesson PASCAL has learned, however, is the very real need for planning, coordinated expectations, and we are eager to "front-load" our next collaborative digitization project with that type of management. Experience gained working with the Greenstone Digital Library software will be used to enhance both the resources developed in this grant and in future digital library projects.

Project Outputs: PASCAL has completed first iterations of several public resources. South Carolina in the American Revolution (<http://www.scmemory.org/SCAR/scar.html>) is our pilot thematic collection. The South Carolina Digital Library (<http://www.digilibsc.org/>) contains best practices and other resources to assist librarians or others involved in creating digital cultural heritage in their undertakings. South Carolina Memory (<http://www.scmemory.org/>) is a destination for end users to access digital collections across the state. There exist planning documents (vision, mission, collection, sustainability) that will guide the development of a full-fledged program. Program presentations have been given at the South Carolina Library Association Special Collections roundtable, the South Carolina Archival Association, and the PASCAL general membership and board meetings. These efforts have increased the visibility of PASCAL's efforts to develop the South Carolina Digital Library program.

Summary comments:

PASCAL has worked to develop partnerships with many institutions and individuals around the state who are interested in or working on the creation of collaborative digital collections. PASCAL has accomplished the objectives set forth in our grant application and is pleased with the results both for what they are and for what they mean for the future of digital libraries in South Carolina. We have established web-based infrastructures to serve a gateway to existing digital collections that will be expanded upon in the coming year; gained substantial project management and technical experience through developing a multi-institutional thematic digital collection; and have expanded the community of interest for digital library issues and services through our outreach efforts. The effort to increase knowledge of digital libraries within the state included the participation of many institutions in a conference of national prominence.

In all, we have laid the foundation for the next steps towards developing a sustainable South Carolina Digital Library program.

Appendix

Institutions Granted Attendance for CLIR Conference

Beaufort County Public Library
Charleston Public Library
Coastal Carolina (2 attendees)
Furman University
League Academy of Communication Arts
Georgetown County Library
Greenville County Library System
South Carolina Historical Society
South Carolina State University (2 attendees)
South Caroliniana Library (University of South Carolina)(2 attendees)
Trident Technical College
University of South Carolina
University of South Carolina at Aiken
University of South Carolina School of Library and Information Science
University of South Carolina School of Medicine
Winthrop University
York Junior High