

Archival Treasure of the Month Display
Kelly Caldwell, Archivist
Moody Medical Library
University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston

Abstract

The Moody Medical Library at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston (UTMB) seeks funding to begin a rotating “Archival Treasure of the Month” exhibit. There are thousands of items held in the Truman G. Blocker, Jr. History of Medicine Collections (Blocker Collections) available to be featured: diaries, notebooks, correspondence, scrapbooks, rare books, microscopes, surgical tools, postcards, postage stamps, etc. This project would dramatically increase access to these rare and unique materials. We are requesting \$5,104.21 to establish this ongoing project.

Background

It is the purpose of this proposal to curate an “Archival Treasure of the Month” display in the Blocker Collections reading room.

The Moody Medical Library already owns the display case to be used for this project. It is free-standing and measures 30” deep, 60” wide, and 36” tall (from the floor to the top of the case). The locked display area is encased in glass and measures 26” deep, 56” wide, and 10” high.

The Blocker Collections houses the following.

- The University Archives hold over 200 collections documenting the history of UTMB as well as the history of medicine and medical education in Texas. Items from these collections include diaries, handwritten notes, correspondence, ledgers, registers, drawings, original research, blueprints, photographs, etc.
- The Rare Book Collection holds over 20,000 volumes and dates to the late 14th century and is considered the most significant collection in the history of the biomedical sciences in the southern United States. Books include incunabula and first, rare, or signed editions of major medical/scientific works (Vesalius, Harvey, Darwin, Pasteur, Freud, etc.).
- The Visual Materials Collection contains the Portrait Collection, the Photograph Collection, the Postcard Collection, and the Postage Stamp Collection. Each of these collections holds at least 5,000 items that feature medical or scientific figures or places.
- The Artifact Collection contains over 2,000 surgical instruments, microscopes, over-the-counter medications from the early 20th century, and a variety of other items.

Benefit

In 2021, the Blocker Collections had over 500 physical visitors to the reading room (2019 had nearly 2,000!). Most of these visitors saw few items: the current feature exhibit and/or the usual 20 tour items. With this project, patrons (especially repeat visitors) will be able to see more of what we have to offer and better understand the magnitude of these collections.

The goal of this project is to have a steady number of exhibit interactions each month such as an in-person visit or email inquiry. Interest throughout the project year will determine its

continuation. We foresee patron interest that inspires suggestions for future displays or even collaborations with faculty or student organizations resulting in student curated installations.

Project Plan

The people involved in this project will be the staff of the Blocker Collections: the Archivist and the Library Services Manager. The Archivist has 12 years of experience working with the materials and patrons of the Blocker Collections. She has created or assisted in creating 10 major exhibits. Duties have included; selection of materials, research, writing, graphic design, layout design, installation, and curation. The Library Services Manager began working in the Blocker Collections in March 2020 and has been in the Moody Medical Library for 20 years. Her exhibit experience includes graphic design, layout design, installation, and curation.

We are going to use the first three months of the project year to prepare nine exhibits. The first step of the project will be to select the nine “treasures.” Criteria will include:

- Collection the item(s) is from. We will make sure to have a variety of materials represented and not display from the same collection consecutively.
- Age/Edition. Favor will be given to older items, first or rare editions, handwritten manuscripts, etc.
- Condition. Since the display items will be locked in a case, items that may not be able to be handled or openly displayed due to their fragile nature will be considered.
- Recognition. We will select three items that have already been displayed in the Blocker Collections because the research is already done and we know that the item(s) will get interactions. The other six months will feature items that are significant historically but are not used/displayed often.

At the same time we will begin designing generic signage indicating that the case is holding the “Treasure of the Month” to be permanently displayed in the case using UTMB approved fonts/colors. We will design two signs at different orientations for inside the case in order to accommodate a variety of sizes of original materials. The signs will each take up one third of the display area. The measurements of the signs will be 6.75”x54” and 24”x16.75”. An additional 24”x36” poster will be created to be displayed in the Moody Medical Library Lobby. The poster will be designed in such a way that it can be easily updated to announce the current month’s “treasure.” This poster can also be printed as an 8.5”x11” flyer to be displayed around campus. These prints will be designed using existing software and printed on foamboard by UTMB’s Graphic Design and Printing Services.

In the second month we will order the supplies needed for this project. Museum quality display materials will be purchased from Gaylord Archival. We will purchase one foam book cradle set in each size (small, medium, large) for the exclusive use of this exhibit. Additionally, we will purchase a pillow that will allow us to display fragile items or microscopes for which foam is not appropriate. We will also purchase museum quality fabric to wrap the foam pieces and pillow to create a professional looking display. One gray fabric and one tan fabric will be selected at the minimum amount of five yards each.

Other supplies that will be purchased from UTMB approved vendors include materials needed to create text and captions for the displays. These can be made in the Blocker Collections office.

SCAMeL Speedy Startup 2022
Moody Medical Library, UTMB

We will purchase a printer that is capable of printing on cardstock with one backup set of toner cartridges; ivory and black cardstock; an easel for the poster in the library lobby; and three rolls of art paper (in UTMB approved colors) to use as background color for the display case.

Most of the research and writing for all nine “treasures” will be done in the first three months and any revisions or edits can be made before the captions are printed, in the week before installation. Each “treasure” will have captions and/or brief accompanying text of no longer than one page. Based on our current practices, the text will be printed on ivory cardstock, cut, and mounted on black cardstock using spray adhesive.

In month three, we will create an announcement describing the project and teasing the “treasures” to be displayed. This will be distributed to the Moody Medical Library website, internal UTMB mailing lists, and various library/medical listservs and newsletters.

In the week prior to exhibit installation, we will finalize, print, and mount the text, gather the display materials, and determine the exhibit layout. The exhibit will be installed on the first business day of the month. A photograph of the installed exhibit will be a featured banner on the Moody Medical Library homepage. Clicking the banner will link to the Blocker Collections’ “Exhibits” page with background information about the “treasure.” Each month, the new exhibit will be added to this page. Throughout the month, we will collect statistics in a spreadsheet: the number of physical visitors; the number of phone calls; the number of emails; the number of clicks on the Moody Medical Library and Blocker Collections websites; and, the number of reference questions fielded at the Information Desk or through Ask A Librarian. On the final business day of the month, we will take the display and clean the case in preparation for the new exhibit the following business day.

Success of this project will be determined by the maintenance of a minimum of thirty total interactions per month. After six months of successful exhibits, we will plan to continue past the project year.

Timeline

Month 1

- Select the nine “treasures” to exhibit and determine display schedule.
- Begin research and writing text.
- Create permanent signage.

Month 2

- Complete signage and send files to UTMB’s Graphic Design and Printing Services.
- Continue research/writing.
- Purchase supplies.

Month 3

- Complete research/writing.
- Draft and distribute announcement explaining project and teasers to the Moody Medical Library website, internal UTMB mailing lists, various library/medical listservs and newsletters.
- Prepare first “treasure” for display: plan layout, gather display materials, print and mount text.

SCAMeL Speedy Startup 2022
Moody Medical Library, UTMB

Months 4-8

- Install exhibit on first business day of month.
- Distribute photograph of exhibit and summary to the Moody Medical Library and Blocker Collections websites.
- Prepare next “treasure” for display: plan layout, gather display materials, print and mount text.
- Gather statistics throughout the month and input into spreadsheet.
- On final day of month, take out exhibit and clean case.

Month 9

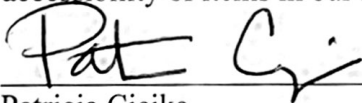
- Same as Months 4-8.
- Based on gathered statistics, determine if the project will continue past project year.
 - Select three additional treasures.
 - Begin research and writing text.

Months 10-12

- Install exhibit on first business day of month.
- Distribute photograph of exhibit and summary to the Moody Medical Library and Blocker Collections websites.
- Prepare next “treasure” for display: plan layout, gather display materials, print and mount text.
- Gather statistics throughout the month and input into spreadsheet.
- On final day of month, take out exhibit and clean case.

Support of Library Director

I endorse the proposed project. Monthly exhibitions of various Blocker Collections holdings will bring more visitors to the Moody Medical Library and inform the public of the breadth and accessibility of items in our special collections.



Patricia Ciejka

Associate Vice President of Library Services and Academic Resources
Moody Medical Library
University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston

Budget

The total amount of funding requested is \$5,104.21.

Most of the funds will be used in the first three months of the project to purchase the display materials needed before the first exhibit is installed. Prices listed below are accurate as of February 14, 2022.

Museum quality materials will be purchased from Gaylord Archival. These items include: large (\$699.99), medium (\$395.99), and small (\$265.99) polyethylene book mount sets; an 18" square display pillow (\$59.20); and five yards each of a gray and tan fabric (\$1,645.00).

All other supplies will be purchased from UTMB approved vendors. These items include: a printer capable of printing on cardstock (\$752.14); backup toner cartridges (CMY \$394.65, black \$143.51); white (\$21.99) and black (\$19.39) cardstock; a display easel (\$34.49); and three rolls of art paper (\$56.).

UTMB's Graphic Design and Printing Services will print the 24"x36" (\$82.34), 6.75"x54" (\$42.00), and 24"x16.75" (\$41.16) posters on foamboard.

UTMB's photographer will charge \$50.00 per exhibit photo session for a total of \$450.00 for nine months.

Description	Total
UTMB Graphic Design and Printing Services	\$165.50
UTMB Photography Services	\$450.00
Gaylord Archival	\$3,066.17
Approved UTMB Vendors	\$1,422.54
Total	\$5,104.21