Final Report for “Documenting History: Farmworkers in Florida During COVID-19”

Synopsis
The purpose of the project “Documenting History: Farmworkers in Florida during COVID 19” was to create an archive of snapshots of relevant digital content that captured the impact that COVID 19 is having on farmworkers in Florida. We received $3,500.00 from CAME to capture content from July 2020 to May 2021. After the CAME funding period was over, we received $3,800 from the Department of Special and Area Studies Collections to extend the project to July 2021.

The funding was used to hire an undergraduate student, Celeste Velazco a specialist in social media, to capture news articles, documents from UF IFAS extension, research studies and polls, social media, petitions and GoFundMes, videos, and websites that documented the impact of COVID-19 on Florida farmworkers from March 2020 to July 2021.

Once Celeste finished capturing content (July 2021), John Nemmers and Margarita Vargas-Betancourt reviewed content for quality control and transferred it to processing archivists Matt Kruse and Nelissa Caraballo who ensured the preservation, organization, and description of the collection “COVID-19 Florida Farmworkers Collection.” The collection’s guide can be consulted in the following link: https://findingaids.uflib.ufl.edu/repositories/2/resources/1776

The collection includes:
- 349 newspaper articles
- 29 documents from UF IFAS Extension
- 5 research studies polls
- 461 social media snapshots
- 8 petitions
- 313 videos

Impact
Innovation: This was the first project in which UF archivists created a collection. The collection is also the first to be a hundred percent born-digital. This project led to the UF Libraries’ acquisition of Archive It, a tool that we have used to crawl websites of community-based organizations. This collection will also allow us to explore the best ways of providing access to digital collections, including content that is still under copyright.

Social Justice: This project is a first step in challenging the underrepresentation of minoritized communities within the UF Libraries’ archives. It led to the development of the proposal “Planning Collaborative Practices for Archiving Farmworker Communities’ Histories” submitted to the Institute of Museum and Library Services National
Leadership Grant. We submitted an initial proposal on September 2021. We were invited to submit a full proposal, which we delivered on March 2022.

The proposed project is a collaboration of library specialists from UF and the University of Miami, an UF IFAS extension officer, and two community-based organizations: the Farmworker Association of Florida and the Rural Women’s Health Project. We are seeking $136,126.00 for two years to design, plan, and document partnerships between academic libraries and farmworker community-based organizations that will identify collaborative practices and strategies to document the experiences of marginalized, under- and mis-represented communities for national replicability.

*Student Career Advancement:* This project provided Celeste Velazco the opportunity to enhance the social media skills she obtained from her major in journalism, as well as to acquire the skillset needed to perform and succeed in a professional setting. The experience helped her obtain the position of Weekend User Services Assistant and Outreach Facilitator right after graduation. Today she is a Social Media Specialist at the UF campus level.

**References**

“Documenting History: Farmworkers in Florida during COVID-19.”
[http://ufdc.ufl.edu/IR00011204/00001](http://ufdc.ufl.edu/IR00011204/00001)

“Planning Collaborative Practices for Archiving Farmworker Communities’ Histories” (first round).
[http://ufdc.ufl.edu/IR00011713/00001](http://ufdc.ufl.edu/IR00011713/00001)

“Planning Collaborative Practices for Archiving Farmworker Communities’ Histories” (full proposal).
[http://ufdc.ufl.edu/IR00011713/00002](http://ufdc.ufl.edu/IR00011713/00002)