

# RESEARCH RELATIONS

Interns dig into women's history at Hankey Center

By Coleen Dee Berry

Last year, Shippensburg University Director of Graduate Studies and Internships John Bloom led his oral history class to Wilson's Hankey Center for a tour at the invitation of Amy Ensley, the center's director.

The center's archives and oral history section—along with the civil rights exhibit that was on display at the time—made a big impression. Four graduate students of the 15 graduate and undergraduate students on the tour voiced a desire to become interns or volunteers at the center. "That's a pretty good percentage, four out of 15," Bloom noted. "All four had a passion for women's history and they found a lot to dig into at the Hankey Center."

Two applied-history graduate students, Sheila Joy and Karlee Johnston, spent their internships at the Hankey Center this fall. Another two of Bloom's graduate students will arrive this spring—one as an intern and one as a volunteer.

Having the Shippensburg students as interns is helping to fulfill the crucial mission to position the center as a national resource on the education of women and women's history, according to Ensley. "This is what Joan Hankey wanted," Ensley said, referring to Capt. Joan R. Hankey '59, whose contributions established the center. "She envisioned the archives as a research center for the history of women's education. This internship program is helping to expand our reach."

Johnston worked on creating lesson plans designed to provide high school teachers with supplemental lessons on women's history and the use of primary documents. One lesson plan she put together on the civil rights movement contained information pulled from the center's exhibit on the involvement of Wilson's students and alumnae during those times.

Another plan was based on the life of Elizabeth McGeorge Sullivan '38, a Women Airforce Service Pilot (WASP) during World War II.

Johnston said she found Sullivan's life inspirational. "She was a really independent woman for her times," Johnston said. "She learned to fly before she learned to drive and she wrote home to her mother that learning to fly was far easier than learning to drive." What can students today learn from Sullivan's example? "You don't have to follow accepted gender roles," Johnston said. "She became a pilot, she didn't marry until she was almost 40 and she lived on her own, which was all very unusual for the time period."

Joy spent her internship organizing a large collection of items from Kathryn C. Keller '40, a missionary with the Chontal indigenous people in southern Mexico, who created a written version of the native

experience and management expertise they will need out in the professional job market, according to Bloom. The Hankey Center not only hits the mark, he said, it offers students a different choice. "In this area particularly, there are a lot of opportunities for more male-centered archives, in military history for example," Bloom said. "For our students who are interested in women's history, the Hankey Center is a great option." Ensley points out that the Hankey Center also has an outstanding collection related specifically to women's military history.

The two interns gave their Hankey Center semester rave reviews. "Amy (Ensley) is great to work with—she's very passionate about women's history," said Joy. Both said they intend to recommend the internship to their teachers and classmates. "We're going to create a wave to come down here from Ship to the center," Johnston said. Both Bloom and Ensley said they would like



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Chontal language (*Read more in Hidden History, page 38*). "Keller's family donated a huge amount of material that we haven't had the resources to catalog properly, so Sheila's work organizing the collection will be an enormous help to future researchers," Ensley said.

The goal of the internship is for Joy and Johnston to acquire both the archival expe-

to see the internship program with Shippensburg continue.

"There's so much here, so much about women's history," said Joy about the Hankey Center. "There were women at Wilson who tie into almost every national event or a time in history, and their stories are here. It's a great resource." **W**