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Syracuse University Libraries receive Delmas Foundation grant

The Syracuse University Libraries have received a \$10,400 grant from the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation to support the preservation of historic sound recordings carried out at the Belfer Audio Archive, a component of the Special Collections Research Center.

The grant will be used to fund a Belfer Preservation Assistant position, augmenting NYS preservation funds dedicated to this purpose. The assistant will be trained in digitization techniques and best practices for handling, cleaning and caring for various legacy sound recording formats, e.g., cylinders, discs, tapes, wires, etc. The assistant will also create documentation of preservation techniques for various forms of audio media.

The assistant, Jim Meade, is a former iSchool student and previous Belfer intern. He will be supervised by Belfer Director Jenny Doctor and trained by Belfer Audio Engineer Bob Hodge, who heads the Belfer Preservation Studio and specializes in transferring audio materials to digital formats.

Founded in 1963, the Belfer is among the largest sound archives in the United States. Belfer collections encompass over 500,000 items, with an emphasis on commercial recordings issued between the 1890s and 1970, including over 22,000 cylinder recordings (the largest privately held collection in the U.S.), over 400,000 pre-LP discs and around 20,000 audio tapes. The Belfer Audio Archive has equipment capable of playing back many audio formats, enabling access and preservation by transferring recordings into digital formats.

The Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation promotes the advancement and perpetuation of humanistic inquiry and artistic creativity by encouraging excellence in scholarship and in the performing arts, and by supporting research libraries and other institutions that transmit our cultural heritage. The programs of the foundation reflect the interests and patronage of its founders, Gladys Kriebel Delmas and Jean Paul Delmas.

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