

Partners in Preservation: The Walter P. Reuther Library, Gale Group Inc., and the United Farm Workers Collection

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Abstract: In 2008 Gale Group Incorporated approached the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs with a collaborative project to microfilm the United Farm Workers' archival collections. Gale requested permission to microfilm three collections: National Farm Workers Association (NFWA), Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC), and the United Farm Workers: Papers of the Office of the President. These three collections provide the most comprehensive history of migrant farm workers' organizing efforts in the United States. Under the contract designed by Gale Group, the collections would be prepared for scanning by archivists at the Reuther Library. An outside agency, paid by Gale Group, would then microfilm the collections. Finally, Gale Group employees would bring together the microfilm, the Reuther finding aids, and a spreadsheet into a prepackaged microfilm product designed to sell to libraries and educational institutions. At the completion of the project the Reuther Library will receive a complete set of the microfilm and may utilize up to 65% of the microfilmed content on the repository's website. The United Farm Workers, the record donors of these collections, will also receive a portion of each sale of the microfilm collection. This is a wonderful example of archives, corporations, and donors coming together to help preserve history and provide greater access to archival collections.

About the author:

Jeanette Olson received her Master's degree from Wayne State University (WSU) in 2009 from the Library and Information Science Program, concurrent with the MLIS, Jeanette also received her Archival Administration Certification. Olson is a University of Michigan alumnus receiving her Bachelor of Arts degree in History and Psychology in 2003. As a graduate student Jeanette was a member of the Society of American Archivists WSU student chapter, serving as chapter President from 2007-2008, and chapter Secretary from 2008-2009. As President, Olson worked to bring students and professionals together in discussion forums and opportunities for professional development. Olson is also a member of the Golden Key International Association, Midwest Archives Association, and the Michigan Archival Association, holding the position of student board member from 2008-2009. She is currently working as a processing archivist for the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs. As a processing archivist, Olson has published multiple finding aids, and served as lead curator for two exhibits: *The Struggle Continues, Victory is Certain & Freedom: The UAW and the Release of Nelson Mandela*. Olson's main interest is in utilizing new and existing technologies to improve access to archival collections and expand the archive's patron base.