Dust Bowl Photo Exhibit helps launch Grapes of Wrath commemoration

Just as the storytelling of John Steinbeck defined the Dust Bowl migrant experience in literature, the photos by Dorothea Lange documented their struggles for a Depression-stricken nation. Now Lange’s photographs are being exhibited at the Stiern Library as part of a year-long exhibit commemorating the 75th anniversary of *The Grapes of Wrath*.

The exhibit officially opened in the Stiern Library October 13 at a reception for travelers from the Steinbeck Center in Salinas, sponsored by the CSUB Public History Institute. About 300 people crowded the Dezember Reading Room to attend the reception, and enjoyed music, food, and viewing the Lange photographs.

More than two hundred people gathered in the Dezember Reading Room to celebrate a 75th anniversary event for the Grapes of Wrath and to tour the library’s photograph exhibit. (Photos by Chris Livingston, graphic by Kristi Chavez)

New archivist launches agenda for growth

The Walter W. Stiern Library is happy to welcome Chris Livingston who joins the library as the Archives and Digital Initiatives Librarian. Chris earned his B.A. and M.A. in History at CSUB and his Master’s in Library and Information Science from San Jose State University (SJSU). While at CSUB he focused his studies on Modern American and Modern European History. His research interests at SJSU were archives, social informatics, information architecture, and public history.

Prior to coming to CSUB he served as Special Collections Librarian and Archivist in charge of the Jack Maguire Local History Room at the Kern County Library where he led the development of the library’s digitization program. He also has been involved in a number of historic preservation projects as well as a variety of program presentations about Kern County History. In the spring of 2013 he was interviewed by C-Span’s American History TV for a mini-documentary about Bakersfield’s 1952 earthquake.

When asked what his duties will be at the library he said, “my roles will include assessing, collecting, organizing, and preserving the records in the archive. I will also oversee the planning and implementation of the library’s digitization program.” Livingston has already started building that program which includes the digitization of photographs, documents related to the university’s history, and soldier’s letters that have been added to the archive’s Civil War Collection. An important aspect of this program has been to place the items that are digitized in an online searchable database. Livingston said, “I was able to do this by working with staff...
Librarian Sandra Bozarth was appointed to a newly created job as Instructional Technology and First Year Experience Librarian. She taught workshops to faculty this summer and fall about using alternative texts and the library to make learning more affordable.

Immediately after taking her position, she organized a team of staff and faculty to start the CSU Affordable Learning Solutions Initiative on campus. The team received a grant for $10,000 to help launch the initiative.

“I know that there are many reasons why students struggle while in college and finances are one reason. The library is playing an active role in supporting students in finding more affordable textbooks with the help of the Affordable Learning Solutions Initiative. I am excited to see this working so quickly and look forward to what is to come,” she said.

Ms. Bozarth has been with the Stiern Library since 2004 and has served in many different roles over the years. She earned her bachelor’s degree in English at CSU Fresno and her Master’s of Library & Information Science from San Jose State University. Before coming to the Stiern Library she worked at various types of libraries including the Fresno County Law Library, Milpitas Correctional Facility Library and the Kern County Public Library, just to mention a few.

Ms. Bozarth started at the Stiern Library as an adjunct librarian working at the reference desk and teaching Information Literacy courses. She has been the subject librarian for several departments on campus including the departments of Education, Criminal Justice and Modern Languages and Literatures. She has also been a librarian liaison for various collections in the library including Government Documents, Law, and most recently the Multicultural Collection and First Year Experience Collection.

Ms. Bozarth is also the Circulation Coordinator in the library and helps with outreach. Working with Dean Curt Asher on outreach projects and the Stiern Library Associates has been something she has been involved with for many years now.

“I have always enjoyed doing outreach for the library,” she said. “The first time students are introduced to the library leaves a long-lasting impression. It is very important to make sure that students feel welcome and comfortable coming to the library, asking questions and getting help with whatever it is they need. I want our students to succeed and I know that by providing them with not only a beautiful place to congregate but the best resources available, the library can help make it happen.”

If you would like more information about the Affordable Learning Solutions Initiative or to learn how to find more affordable textbooks and course materials please contact Ms Bozarth at sbozarth@csub.edu.

So much is new: Learning resources for students expand dramatically

The learning resources in the library have grown dramatically and now include a streaming video database, tens of thousands of new e-books, an online archive of more than 7,000 slavery and abolition documents, a major new business resource, and full-text digital access to a library of important agricultural engineering materials.

Other expanded resources include thousands of new science articles through ScienceDirect, hundreds of new journals in the arts and sciences through JSTOR, and a major upgrade of the Ebsco database, which means thousands of new resources for students in the school’s most popular database.

“It really is a good time to be a student here. There are so many great new resources,” said Curt Asher, Interim Dean of the library. “We’re building our collections around student needs.”

In addition to the new resources, the library has expanded the check-out period for iPads to three days.

“The students have been checking out the iPads like crazy. We definitely need more of them,” Asher said.

The CSU campuses have been evaluating together the best method for buying and managing e-book collections. This summer technical services staff finished loading more than 80,000 new e-books into the Stiern Library catalog. These are books provided on a subscription basis by a vendor and shared among the 23 CSU campuses.

The library also launched a new subscription this summer for educational films through Ambrose. It contains videos for courses in the sciences as well as social science and humanities. These include PBS and BBC series, including the entire BBC Shakespeare series. It’s the first time the library has worked with a vendor to get access to streaming video collections available in a database.

The library has upgraded its popular Ebsco database to a Premier. This will add hundreds of new journals to our most popular database. Also new in Ebsco we have Business Source Premier, which will provide access to 2,853 peer reviewed business journals.

An electronic archive called Debates over Slavery and Abolition that the library purchased will provide students with a vast collection of searchable primary historical sources, including 7,000 historical books and pamphlets, 80 historical newspaper and magazines titles and access to 18 manuscript collections.

The library launched a new subscription to the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers Technical library database, to support the curriculum in that program. We also added the Chicano Database, a collection of materials on Latino culture in the US.

It also added collections of 800 new full text journals to the JSTOR collection, which contains runs of some of the most important journals in academia.
Archivist (continued from page 1) at the CSU Chancellor’s office to get our items stored in D-Space Scholarworks, the CSU’s digital content management system.” He added that this system will allow the collection to be searched which should increase exposure of the CSUB Archives to outside scholars. When asked about his other plans for the archives he said “by the end of the year we will have an additional 1000 square feet of archival storage space. We will also be creating a reading room for special collections and a small exhibition gallery. These are very important additions because with the added space we can go after archival collections that will enhance the prestige of the archive and support the mission of the Public History Institute.” The library hopes to work with the History Department and the Public History Institute to develop coursework that will give students exposure to the archival and public history fields. “Public history,” he noted, “is a fast growing field with job opportunities across the U.S. in archives, libraries, museums, and historical consulting. It would make sense to have such a program here in the Central Valley.” Rounding out his new duties, Livingston will serve as the subject librarian for History, Philosophy, and Religious Studies.

Grapes of Wrath (continued from page 1) and drinks, and a panel discussion. The panel consisted of a group of artists and writers retracing the route of the fictional Joad family and a film crew, which is documenting the journey. Student docents Eduardo Sandoval, Kim Kartinen, and Kim Nolan-Molina led visitors on guided tours of the exhibits, providing perspective and historical context to the photos. “We were honored to host the event that launches this year of commemoration,” said Curt Asher, Interim Library Dean. “We’re looking forward to what’s to follow. Dr. Richard Collins, Dean of Arts and Humanities, and the Public History Institute committee led by Dr. Miriam Vivian have really pulled together an incredible year of events.” Lange’s photos are part of a collection of materials on the Dust Bowl that the library archive has housed for decades. The centerpiece of that collection is the 57 oral histories that were collected from Dust Bowl migrants in 1979 and 1980 by CSUB faculty and students as part of an effort to preserve the history of the region. That collection has been nurtured by librarian Christy Gavin, since its inception. She has built an online research hub that contains, in addition to the recordings and transcripts, a bibliography of primary and secondary research sources, and documentary photographs. The photos, many taken by famed photographer Dorothea Lange, who was documenting the migration for the Farm Security Administration, tell the story of displacement and pain. Forced by devastating environmental and economic collapse to leave home in the southern Midwest in hopes of finding work and a better life in California, the impoverished migrants instead found hardship and prejudice. “They survived the hard times and eventually they and their descendants established roots in California’s Central Valley,” Ms. Gavin said. “And their legacy lives on. Their distinct accent is still heard and their evangelical Christianity thrives. But as historian James Gregory asserts, ‘the most profound contribution of the Okies is their country music, which was essential to reconstructing the Okie identity into a more socially acceptable one,’ and he credits many musicians, particularly Bob Wills during the 1940s and Merle Haggard in the 1960s.” The exhibit was constructed by Archivist Chris Livingston, Librarian Christy Gavin, and artist and library employee Kristi Chavez, with help from CSUB Gallery director Joey Kotting. The photos and other archival memorabilia will be on exhibit in the library for a year.

Walter Presents: Livingston discusses Biggar’s Bakersfield In a presentation on October 23, archivist Chris Livingston traced the education and career of Charles H. Biggar and his influence on Bakersfield and California architecture as part of the Walter Presents Series. Livingston told the crowd of attendees in the Dezember Reading Room the story of how a kid from Danville, Ohio developed a passion for architecture through education and apprenticeships in the United States and France. As his career developed, cities such as Los Angeles and Bakersfield benefited from his passion in the form of schools, libraries, churches, and civic structures. He was instrumental in bridging “old school” architectural design and urban planning with modern techniques. Walter Presents is a series of lectures, presentations, readings, exhibits and performances provided by the library to engage the campus and community in topics of shared interest.

Digital displays bring info to students Thanks to a generous gift from Wells Fargo, the digital monitors have been installed on the first floor and in the 24-hour room. The displays announce library and campus events.

Summer Workshop a success 2013 Stiern Library PG&E Writer in Residence Angie Chau held a successful reading and workshop this summer. The 2014 Writer in Residence will be named in the next newsletter.
Walter W. Stiern Library Associates

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