



Donate! Share! Connect!

The Samuel Proctor Oral History Program relies on the guidance and support of our growing network of sustainers. If you are an alumni or you have a story that you want to share, please let us know! Whatever the case, thank you for being a member of the SPOHP community. We look forward to continuing to provide you with exciting updates about our students' research!

Wishing everyone a holiday season full of health, happiness, and love!

The Samuel Proctor Oral History Program
241 Pugh Hall, P.O. Box 115215
The University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611

SPOHP LIGHT

The Samuel Proctor Oral History Program

In This Issue:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Director's Message..... | 2 |
| About Us..... | 3 |
| JBA Updates..... | 4 |
| NEH Grant..... | 8 |
| MFOS Updates..... | 9 |
| Veterans Project Updates..... | 10 |
| LDAP/OGUS Updates..... | 11 |
| Other Project Updates..... | 12 |
| Community/Collaborations..... | 13 |
| Alumni Highlights..... | 15 |
| Announcements/Events..... | 17 |

Director's Message



Dear Friends of the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program,

What a year we've had. Thanks to your support, SPOHP has impacted more communities, students, scholars, and members of the general public than ever before. In recognition of the sterling work we've done in documenting the experiences of first-generation college students at the University of Florida, we were the recipients of the Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars 2020-2021 First Generation Champions Award!

The success of Proctor Program alumni has been inspiring. This fall, Drs. Mathew Simmons and Raja Rahim, former graduate research assistants for SPOHP, accepted tenure track assistant professorships of history at Appalachian State University and Emmanuel College, respectively. Recent SPOHP interns, volunteers and staff have become elementary school teachers, labor organizers, and tech startup entrepreneurs. Former students who participated in SPOHP's Mississippi Freedom Project have matriculated to law schools at Harvard, Duke, Penn, UF and other prestigious programs.

This year we embarked on a project to digitize, transcribe and make accessible SPOHP's 1,000+ archive of interviews with Native American elders. Thanks to generous support from the Doris Duke Charitable Trust, our graduate students have established working relationships with several different Indigenous nations and tribes in the Southeast to make Native history an integral part of American history.

Our Reanimating African American Oral Histories in the Gulf South, supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, allows us to create new lesson plans for K-12 teachers drawing from SPOHP's Joel Buchanan Archive of African American Oral History. This innovative collaboration between colleagues in Linguistics, Smathers Libraries and the All Y'all Social Justice Collective combines artificial intelligence, machine learning language and curriculum development to make history fun and accessible to all. This is the true meaning of oral history!

I hope that you will visit or phone us sometime over the next several months. Our students, staff and volunteers treasure the opportunity to personally share their experiences with members of the growing SPOHP family of alumni, supporters, and fellow historians! Thank you as always for your consideration and your support.

Best wishes for a wonderful holiday season,

Paul Ortiz

For more information, please visit: <https://oral.history.ufl.edu>

Follow us on social media @SPOHP



Announcements and Upcoming Events

2022 SPOHP Volunteering

Interested in community-based oral history methodologies through hands-on experiences in research and conducting and processing oral interviews? Volunteers will learn about the best oral history practices, digital production techniques, and public outreach methods. SPOHP is now accepting applications for our 2022 Spring semester! To learn more, email adolforomero@ufl.edu or scan the QR code to learn more and apply.



UCLA and SPOHP Webinar

SPOHP and the UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Initiative will be hosting a webinar on April 19, 2022, with a focus on the 2022 mid-term Florida election. Panelists will discuss prevalent issues impacting minorities in Florida, topics ranging from education, incarceration, minimum wage, voting laws, and more. Stay connected on our social media to receive updates on this and other upcoming events!



Remember to follow us on social media
@SPOHP to stay connected!

Alumni Highlights



Dr. Ben Houston

Dr. Ben Houston is a Senior Lecturer at Newcastle University in the UK, and a founding member of the Oral History Collective started there. He is currently working on a monograph that features oral histories from Black Pittsburghers, setting their life and times against the changing fortunes of a deindustrializing city. This derives from an oral history project that he directed after leaving UF. To learn more about his work, please scan the QR code below.



About Us

Mission

SPOHP is an award-winning, social-justice research center engaged in experiential learning initiatives all over the world. Our team of student researchers, interns, volunteers, and staff are dedicated to gathering, preserving, and promoting living histories of individuals from all walks of life.

SPOHP is committed to using critical historical inquiry and digital humanities production to encourage civic engagement and dialogue between the past, present and the future.

Our Work

SPOHP supports diverse projects such as those listed below. We also encourage students to pursue their own projects if interested. Visit <https://oral.history.ufl.edu/projects/> to learn more about our work.



Project Updates:

Joel Buchanan Archive of African American History (JBA Collection)

The Joel Buchanan Archive, with the help of staff and volunteers, has transcribed and uploaded 230 new interviews documenting the oral histories of African Americans in Greater Florida and the Mississippi Delta, despite the challenges of the past year.



Race and Remembrance Podcast Series

SPOHP's podcast series, "Race and Remembrance," is now available on Spotify and other platforms. Using interviews from our Joel Buchanan Archive, we confront themes of racial terror in 20th century Florida, the local Civil Rights Movement, the history of racism within the University of Florida, and the struggle for equity and justice today, while amplifying stories from the Black community. Scan the QR code above to start listening!

Black Faculty Recruitment and Retention Project (BFRP)



SPOHP researchers continue working on the Black Faculty and Staff Recruitment and Retention at UF Oral History Project (BFRP). Many salient themes have emerged regarding Black professionals' recruitment and retention at UF. One such theme is that UF administration needs to publicly support social justice efforts by UF faculty and staff on campus, in the community, and in the academy. For more information about BFRP contact the project coordinator: gtopalidis@ufl.edu.

Alumni Highlights



Alan Bliss

While at the History Department at the University of North Florida, Dr. Bliss has taught a variety of courses including public history and a seminar on oral history. In 2018, Alan became CEO at the Jacksonville Historical Society, growing its oral history program is part of the strategic plan. A wide-ranging series of interviews will inform the publication of a book about Jacksonville in 2022 on the occasion of the city's 200th anniversary.

With warm gratitude, Alan credits the late, great Sam Proctor and Julian Pleasants for the opportunity to develop ability in this area of historical practice. Oral history is a gift to the future.

Community Events and Collaborations Continued



Martin County Collaboration

SPOHP partnered with residents of Martin County to help preserve its Black heritage history. Oral history interviews will be conducted to better understand the history of the Salerno School, which served African Americans students for many years.

Alachua County Community Remembrance Project

The Alachua County Community Remembrance Project (ACCRP) focuses on uncovering the history surrounding local lynchings in the community, and promote healing from the devastation through soil ceremony events. In collaboration with the ACCRP, SPOHP has attended multiple soil collection ceremonies throughout the year and conducted interviews with participants to better understand the meaning of truth and reconciliation.



St. Augustine Episcopal Church

Reverend George Guy, Charmine Gibson, and SPOHP are researching the history of St. Augustine Episcopal Church and School. In 1889, the Diocese of Florida established a small Mission Church in Gainesville, Florida to serve Anglican people of color. St. Augustine Episcopal Church was the first Afro-American entity in the State of Florida. In 1970, the Diocese of Florida closed St. Augustine Episcopal Church. The church building is located at 405 NW 4th Ave, Gainesville, FL 32601. The building is currently rented by an organization that cares for adults with intellectual disabilities during the day as an Adult Day Care and Training Center. Rev. Guy has made it a priority to establish a historical marker.



Oak Hammock Oral History Project

In our long tradition of documenting oral histories, SPOHP will be interviewing residents of the Oak Hammock retirement community. With over 850 residents since its inception in 2004, Oak Hammock boasts a vibrant community of retirees. This project aims to trace the origin of this institution and capture the rich experiences of residents. Watch out for the commencement of this project in January 2022.



Gainesville Sun Reported Lynchings Research



Working with the Gainesville Sun database, SPOHP is reviewing hundreds of historical newspaper entries in Alachua County with keywords relating to the lynching of African Americans throughout the twentieth century. We are hoping to identify unknown or underrepresented occurrences of lynching and provide justice to those that were murdered.

Reverend Allen Memorial Event

In honor of the late Reverend Albert Sidney James Allen, a commemoration of life was held on June 25, 2021 by the Alachua-Newnansville Community Remembrance Project in partnership with the Equal Justice Initiative at the Lowe's Family Memorial Garden. Reverend Allen was a prominent minister of the Methodist church in Alachua County until 1904 when he was killed by a White plantation owner. To view a recording of the memorial event, please scan the QR code to the right.



The Florida Times Union: newspaper article from April 23, 1904 about Rev. Allen



NEGRO PREACHER KILLED NEAR ALACHUA

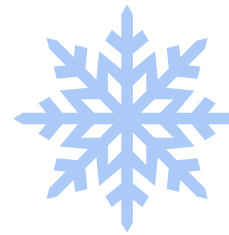
GAINESVILLE. April 23 - J. L. Shaw, a prominent farmer, who resides near Alachua, shot and instantly killed Rev. A. S. J. Allen, a negro preacher, about 3 o'clock Thursday afternoon in a difficulty which occurred over a fence which Shaw was building. Allen owns adjoining property and from the best information that can be learned, the dispute arose over a boundary line. The preacher and a few of his friends congregated to make trouble and Allen cursed Mr. Shaw and threatened his life, stating "that he would get even with him before the sun set." Mr. Shaw then shot Allen, killing him instantly.



Scan the QR code to listen to an interview with Mrs. Wetona Johnson as part of the Alachua County and Newnansville Community Remembrance Project.

Newnansville Project

SPOHP in conjunction with the Alachua/Newnansville community subcommittee conducted a series of interviews at the Alachua Public Library. The goal of this set of interviews is to trace the changes and development in Alachua. Most of the narrators were elderly residents who gave concise information about life in Alachua while growing up. New research assistants at SPOHP had the opportunity to get involved in the interview setup.



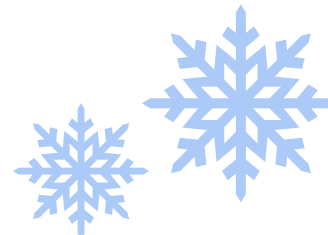
Community Events and Collaborations

50th Anniversary: Lincoln High School's Last Graduating Class

In early summer, SPOHP attended and recorded the 50th anniversary of Lincoln High School's final graduating class. The celebration was created to raise funds for a memorial wall on the Lincoln Middle School campus to honor all who attended Lincoln High. The Lincoln Legacy Celebration was hosted by the Lincoln PTSA and the Anti-Hate Team.



Scan QR code to read a Gainesville Sun article about this event!



Current state of the old Central Academy High School in 2011.

Central Academy High School

As part of the Reanimating African American Oral Histories of the Gulf South project, a team from the SPOHP interviewed previous students from Central Academy High School. Central Academy High School, in Palatka, Florida, was Florida's first accredited Black high school. The school was founded in 1882 and accredited in 1924. In 1969, the school was integrated and renamed. The district later closed the integrated school in 1977, and since then, the building has become significantly dilapidated. For years now, students, teachers, and community members who remember the school fondly have organized to advocate for the building's restoration.

Florida Naturalist History Collection

In the Florida Naturalist Oral History Project, environmentalists discuss the degradation of Florida waterways and ecosystems. Conservationism is a way of life for the interviewees. Each offers biological, social science, and political perspectives. The topics covered in these oral histories range from acknowledging alligators as ecological engineers who unclog waters, prevent droughts, and cycle nutrients; to breaking down permaculture with an emphasis on an organic, non-chemical approach; to solutions to contemporary environmental issues.



Doris Duke Grant



Redressing Native American Oral Histories

From 1966-1975, Doris Duke provided funding to seven universities to collect 6,500 oral histories from indigenous people in the United States. The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation has appointed the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries and Museums (ATALM) to serve as the National Coordinator to work with the seven universities, including UF, and Native communities to improve culturally appropriate access to the collections. In collaboration with libraries at UF, SPOHP is working to improve and update the quality of the audio and transcripts, with the goal of repatriating close to a thousand interviews to the native tribes.

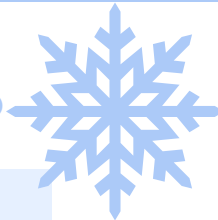


Scan QR code to learn more!

Mississippi Freedom Project (MFP)

This summer, SPOHP's field researchers traveled to the Mississippi Delta for seven days and conducted interviews with elders and their descendants. SPOHP researchers had the opportunity to learn about the inequalities in Elaine, Arkansas and the disenfranchisement of this Black community in 1919. In Glendora, Mississippi, the team traveled to the Emmett Till Historic Center and toured the grounds where Emmett Till once walked and where his destiny would be marked. To conclude the trip, SPOHP attended the National Memorial for Peace and Justice and the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, Alabama. In early October, SPOHP hosted an event in which participants of MFP held a conversation about their experiences in the Mississippi Delta. To watch interviews with the community, scan the QR code below.

Washington DC Trip



On August 28, 2021, members of the SPOHP team travelled to Washington D.C. to interview Impacted Families at their March on Washington and the Department of Justice. SPOHP helped the Mass Action Against Police Brutality document their stories and give impacted families the opportunity to tell their truth and be heard. Be sure to check out these moving oral history interviews when they arrive in the University of Florida Digital Collections!





NEH Grant: Reanimating African American Oral Histories of the Gulf South



SPOHP, UF Department of Linguistics, and George A. Smathers Libraries are proud to announce our collaborative project: Reanimating African American Oral Histories of the Gulf South. This innovative program creates a new online interface and curriculum modules for use in formal and informal educational settings—unleashing the hidden content of 500 civil rights oral histories collected in the Gulf South. With the rise of audio and video recording technologies in the past century, oral history interviews have been collected throughout the United States. Yet while literally tens of thousands of these interviews exist today, most of them remain largely inaccessible to the public, their power to shape and enlighten lying untapped. This project’s foundation is the Joel Buchanan African American Oral History Archive, which contains over 500 interviews with African Americans in the Gulf South, a population absent from many other oral history collections.

Latinx Diaspora in the Americas Project (LDAP) Updates

In collaboration with the Latino Policy and Politics Initiative at UCLA, SPOHP interviewed runner ups in the 2022 mid-term Florida election. A focus was placed on discussing issues impacting the Latinx community.

Scan QR code to watch recording of event:

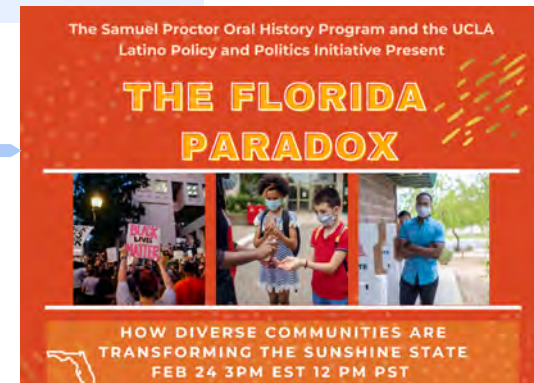


Ottoman Greeks in the United States (OGUS)

Researchers for the Ottoman Greeks of the US Project have been busy curating a new set of images donated by Dr. George Papadi to the OGUS collection. Dr. Papadi’s family’s origins are from Samsun, Turkey. His grandfather Filaretos was an officer of the Ottoman Empire’s Department of Forestry and his uncle George served in the Ottoman army.



The family departed from Samsun just prior to 1921 for what was then the British-controlled Cameroon. The 1930s found the Papadi family in New York City where the family established itself. This image depicts George’s grandfather Filaretos. To learn more about the Ottoman Greeks of the US project, contact the project’s founder and coordinator, Yiorgo Topalidis.





Our Veterans History Project is unique when compared to the other projects in the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program in that these histories are not only archived here at the University of Florida, but also become part of the Library of Congress' American Folklife Center: <https://www.loc.gov/vets/>. While the pandemic has made it difficult for us to do the traditional, in-person outreach to local veterans' organizations as we've done in years past, we have still been able to conduct oral histories this past year thanks to both word-of-mouth and our social media. These include two oral histories with World War II vets.

In recognition of Pearl Harbor Day on December 7, here is an excerpt from a December 2018 oral history with Gainesville resident and survivor **Vern Hodson**, who was stationed at Schofield Barracks, just inland from Pearl Harbor and adjacent to Wheeler Army Airfield, a primary target of the Japanese attack:



I seen 'em blow up Wheeler Field...They were designated to blow that airfield up. Wheeler Field and us, they were flying low, because no one was shooting at them. All they done to us was they were machine gunning our barracks...They were flying so low, one flew about fifty feet above my barracks, and as he seen me at my window looking up, he tipped his wings and waved at me...I could see his plane like I'm looking at you...If I had had my .45, I think I could have shot him...I could see his goggles, looking out of the canopy.



Listen to Mr. Vern Hudson's full interview here:



Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars (MFOS) Program



Spring 2021 Internship

To increase knowledge of the history of the Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars (MFOS) program, SPOHP created a Spring 2021 Internship course with a focus on educational equity in higher education. SPOHP Interns had the opportunity to work collaboratively with UF Oral History and the Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars program to create a historical timeline on MFOS and conduct interviews with MFOS Alumni and current students.

Documentary Production

The MFOS program celebrates fifteen years of success ensuring the academic success of first-generation college students at the University of Florida. MFOS alumni are now making their mark on society and giving back to the Gator Nation. In honor of this momentous anniversary, the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program produced "MFOS at 15 Years," a documentary of the MFOS program told through sixty oral history interviews. To view the documentary on SPOHP's YouTube channel, scan the QR code to the right.



November 8th marks National First-Generation College Celebration Day, commemorating the Higher Education Act of 1965 and honoring those who are the first in their families to attend university. In culmination of all the work that SPOHP has produced for MFOS, SPOHP was acknowledged and awarded "The First-Generation Champions Award" for these efforts and outstanding support for first-generation students.

SPOHP 2021

Year-end Newsletter!



JOEL BUCHANAN
AFRICAN AMERICAN
ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVE
SAMUEL PROCTOR ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

