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## **University Libraries Awarded National Grant to Preserve Artifacts from Five Pathbreaking New Jersey Politicians**

Julia Mills

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# University Libraries Awarded National Grant to Preserve Artifacts from Five Pathbreaking New Jersey Politicians

Wednesday, July 21, 2021

By Julia Mills

The Archives & Special Collections Center of the University Libraries has been awarded a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, a branch of the National Archives, to support the collections from five pathbreaking New Jersey politicians.



Technical Services Archivist Sheridan Sayles and Assistant Dean Sarah Ponichtera in the Vault where the archival collections will be stored for future generations. With proper storage techniques, these collections will fit into half of the space they currently occupy.

The politicians include:

- **Arthur A. Quinn (1856-1957)**, state legislator and labor

leader

- **Bernard Michael Shanley (1903-1992)**, White House staff member during the Eisenhower Administration
- **Richard Joseph Hughes (1909-1992)**, New Jersey's first Catholic governor (1962-1970)
- **Brendan Byrne (1924-2018)**, governor of New Jersey from 1974 to 1982
- **Donald Payne (1934-2012)**, first African American member of the U.S. House of Representatives from New Jersey (1989-2012)

Scholars will have access to documents and objects from the office, diaries, personal reflections and photos of these five NJ leaders. Older materials dating back to the early and mid-twentieth century even include texts transcribed through dictaphone recordings.

In addition to fostering greater accessibility to the collections, the grant will allow archivists to add context surrounding leaders that influenced hot-button issues like labor advocacy and civil rights. University students and researchers will likewise be offered behind-the-scenes insight into each politician's official career including research files created by legislative aides and pertinent materials related to various Presidential administrations such as that of Herbert Hoover, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Richard Nixon and Barack Obama.

"This project will not only preserve Seton Hall's most important political collections but also transform our space, preparing us to accept new collections



Technical Services Archivist Sheridan Sayles constructed a custom box for this volume which compiles Carpenter's Union publications featuring poetry, prose, and historical data, specially

documenting printed for Arthur Quinn. Quinn papers,  
the history MSS 132

unfolding in our  
time," said

Sarah Ponichtera, assistant dean for Special Collections and the  
Gallery.

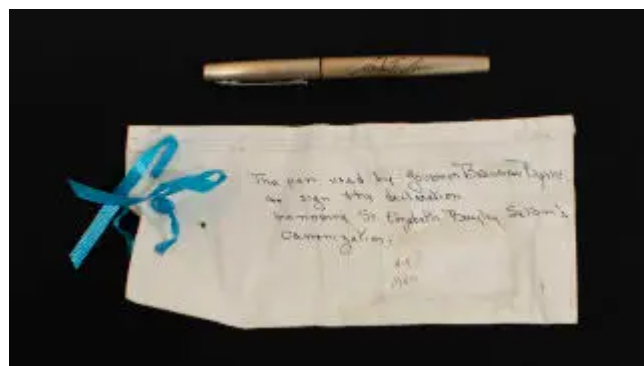
Founded in 1976, the Archives holds three principal sets of  
source materials: University documents, manuscript  
collections, and the archival records for the Archdiocese of  
Newark. The Center seeks to find a balance between access to  
the public and preservation for future generations.

In support of that mission, the Seton Hall team of archivists has  
modernized the ways they maintain these collections. In the  
past decade, the Center has been transitioning more photos to  
mylar sleeves, which use a sturdier polyester base, and updating  
the climate-controlled systems in the vault.

"Storing photographs in mylar sleeves allows us to protect these  
important images while ensuring they are visible to users," said  
Sheridan Sayles, technical services archivist. "Also, since we will  
have the resources to better describe these materials, we can  
give them more meaning to researchers."

These innovations help protect the original details of artifacts  
while reducing the storage footprint and consolidating space  
for new materials.

Additionally, the  
Library has been  
strategically  
digitizing more  
primary sources  
for wider  
accessibility  
among the  
research  
community. In  
2018, Seton Hall  
restored and



This was the pen that Governor Brendan  
Byrne used to sign the declaration  
honoring the canonization of St.  
Elizabeth Ann Seton. MSS 7, Accession  
no. 2021.05.0001.A

digitized an illuminated 17th century Qur'an and made the pages available to scholars across the globe.

"Things not online can essentially become invisible," said Ponichtera. "So, we want to find ways to add more materials to the conversation."

The Center also encourages members of the community (students, faculty and administrators, retired or active) to donate materials telling the stories of Seton Hall to the archives. Students can donate records of student organizations, faculty can donate research materials and manuscripts and administrators can donate working files including planning documents and meeting minutes. Electronic records including emails and social media posts are welcome as are paper records.

To inquire about possible items to submit to Archives and Special Collections, please contact [archives@shu.edu](mailto:archives@shu.edu).

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