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# 2016 Annual Report of the work in IMSA's Archives

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Annual Report  
of the work in  
IMSA's Archives

“Preserving the present so the future  
will know its past.”\*

1 June 2016

## Annual Report of the work in IMSA's Archives

### Preface:

The IMSA Archives, housed in the Leto M. Furnas Information Resource Center, serves to collect and preserve materials relating to the history of the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy and the activities of its students and staff.

This digital Archives & Special Collections includes materials on the establishment of IMSA, led by Dr. Leon Lederman and Governor James Thompson; the Academy's development since 1986; its ideas and programs; partnership programs for educators and schools state- and nationwide; and the lives of its students, alumni, and staff.\*\*

### Introduction:

The archive of an institution plays a key role as the keeper of the institutional memory. That role can only be fulfilled if materials are gathered, preserved and made accessible. That IMSA's Archives and Library staffs have institutional longevity and have known many alumni as students, has significantly aided our work. This year the focus of the Archives has been on further developing several collections and making them available on Digital Commons [DC], work that has been made possible by the expertise and creativity of Jean Bigger and her work on DC. In addition work has continued to strengthen collections in general, to build new collections, and to make the Archives more accessible to administration, students, faculty, staff, students, and alumni, as well as to others in Illinois, USA and the world. To that end the volunteer staff set four sets of goals for the year, which are set out below along with an assessment of accomplishments and a look to the future.

### Goals:

1. Maintenance of the current collections: The plan is to assess the current collections, to prioritize and then begin the process of pruning, de-duplicating, and otherwise conserving paper and photographic collections and to identify key collections for special attention.

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\*The quote on the title page was inspired by the collections campaign slogan of the Danish National Museum as seen in Copenhagen April, 2015.

\*\* "Archives and Special Collections," *Digital Commons @ IMSA*, [http://digitalcommons.imsa.edu/special\\_collections/](http://digitalcommons.imsa.edu/special_collections/)

2. Operations: The plan is to maximize operations with limited resources through the use of student workers, to establish regular hours, and to reorganize the Annex.
3. Developing collections and providing accessibility: The plan is to strengthen current collections, start new collections and work on improved accessibility through the use of Digital Commons, to continue to mount and staff exhibits for Alumni Weekend and to mount at least one other exhibit.
4. Services: The plan is to maintain current programmatic support including providing an Archives presence at special events as possible and appropriate.

### **Accomplishments:**

1. Important work has been done to improve the maintenance of current collections. Especially important here is to continue to ensure that the storage and organization of materials follows national norms. Student periodicals with smaller runs, for example, have been reorganized to follow the format of the longer run publications, thus facilitating easier access. We have begun work on several much used collections to de-duplicate, prune and integrate materials to use space more efficiently. Here it should be mentioned that our collection of materials by and about Leon Lederman has been thoroughly reorganized and much has been placed in the Archives & Special Collections of DC. Including the photo gallery this collection documents the importance of Dr. Lederman's many contributions to IMSA.

The Archives has a rich collection of photographs. Some had been matted and framed in non-acid free materials, compromising the images and are now stabilized in acid free environments, a process that is continuing. Student workers have moved photographs from deteriorating albums to archive quality storage, and they have begun the long process of scanning slides to electronic storage so the images can again be used. In addition some photographs of importance are now being displayed on the walls of the Archives, though some of those also need further preservation work.

The small collection of artifacts and books while for the most part stored appropriately also needed work. During the past year, a student worker wrapped, labeled, boxed and indexed our growing collection of IMSA-wear in a manner appropriate to an archive. The collection of books written by alumni has now been catalogued and those books available for local circulation have been flagged in the regular catalog by library staff. Books and dissertations written by faculty and staff still need cataloging and the remaining artifacts should be indexed.

2. IMSA's Archives is located in two small rooms in the Library and is staffed by two part time volunteers and one student worker. Since IMSA's DC is managed by a Library staff member we share resources, especially staff time with the Library and other staff give other support to the Archives. As a way to use student service hours more effectively we developed the "box project" system. Material that required processing was placed in a box with any necessary resources and simple directions. This was then passed on to Jean Bigger who supervises students doing their service hours in the library.

For example, the principal's office had loaned the Archives a series of course catalogues in hard copy that needed scanning for uploading to DC. This became an early box project. A photo album was deteriorating so it was placed in a box with protective gloves and archive quality photo holders and directions for disassembling the album and placing the photos appropriately in the acid free environment. The 40 hours thus contributed turned out to be an effective system for getting basic work done.

Below is a table of the hours contributed since 1 July 2015 by two volunteers and student workers to the Archives. (The hours contributed by the Library staff are not included herein.)

Person(s)	Hours
Two volunteers	ca. 325 to the end of April*
Student assigned to the Archives	18
Students assigned to the Library	ca. 40

\*At this writing it is anticipated that by 30 June 2016 the two volunteers will have contributed approximately 60 additional hours.

In August of 2015 the Archives established regular hours; i.e. Wednesdays from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. As a consequence the number of people, especially students, who walk in with queries about IMSA's history have increased. For example, several members of the Student Council asked one Wednesday, if there were any documents relating to changes in pedagogy and curriculum at IMSA. Our collection of material on those topics gave the students the opportunity to do research with professional guidance over many weeks. One Wednesday, to give another example, someone from the Business Office came in and asked if we had any information regarding a first year employee, which we found for her. Our time on campus is limited, but in some cases Paula Garrett has been able to make the Archives available at times when we could not.

The Annex was cleaned and most of the materials not part of our collection were removed. The process of transferring documents from binders to folders is nearly completed thus freeing up much needed space. All of the materials in the flat storage unit have been reorganized, pruned, labeled and indexed, making those materials much more accessible. Included in these collections are plat maps and other maps of IMSA's property, as well as architects' drawings for various building projects, and IMSA as well as pre-IMSA floor plans. There is, for example, a very nice floor plan of the sleeping areas when they were in the main building that first year

Lastly something needs to be noted about the budget. The Archives is housed in two rooms in the Library and is provided with a computer with access to the internal and external networks. The two volunteers have access to building facilities and the Library

staff contribute of their time and expertise. The Archives does not, however, have an operating budget, though a small designated-fund has been established through the IMSA Development office.

3. In order for the future to know its past we must save the present. Therefore we must establish new collections and expand current ones and we must improve access to all collections as appropriate. To support this work we have served as liaison to faculty, administration, administrative assistants and other staff, and we have identified significant collections in the institution and within Archives that are of historic value and celebrate the contributions of our founders and stakeholders. Our work with Jean Bigger and IMSA's DC has been fundamental both to building collections and to improve access, especially as this applies to the section labeled Archives and Special Collections. At the beginning of the year there were many discussions about the appropriate architecture of DC and what material had priority for inclusion. It should be noted that since its initiation, there have been 4412 full-text downloads from the Archives and Special Collections section of the DC, and 2219 full-text downloads during this fiscal year. Clearly the collections of the Archives have become much more accessible. In this context several collections stand out.

First and foremost we worked on the Leon Lederman collection. We began by taking stock of what we have and identifying those items that should be digitized. Jean Bigger supervised a group of students assigned to do service hours in the Library who then scanned each item. The result is a rich collection of texts by and about Leon Lederman as well as a photo gallery all of which documents Leon's many contributions to IMSA and to high school education in Illinois and the world. As part of the process we had a productive meeting with the archive staff at Fermi Lab to cooperate and coordinate our respective Lederman holdings and including mutual cross-references between the two on-line collections. This work has strengthened the collection measurably and the world now has access to an effective index and a rich collection of materials.

Since access to archival materials is especially important to alumni, one of our goals has been to collect and make accessible exemplary student work. As part of that effort we were able to find all the Presentation Day catalogues, student workers digitized them and this collection was added to DC. When the site is first accessed, a user encounters each year's catalogue cover, many of which were made by students. Selecting a cover gives access to the schedule and the abstracts of the presentations made in a given year. Of course, others besides alumni have an interest in seeing what IMSA students have done over the years and they now also have access to this material.

We expanded and made more accessible several additional collections. Working with the principal's office, we were able to add a significant number of course and intersession catalogues to those already held by the Archives. All of these were then digitized by student workers and uploaded to DC. In addition, the collection of books authored by alums has grown, mostly through donations. Furthermore, the library staff have flagged the catalogue entrees for those alumni authored books that are available for circulation (local only). In addition, *IMSA Profiles*, a James R. Thompson image gallery, and examples of student diversity have all been identified, digitized and placed on DC.

4. Over the past year Archives has provided programmatic support to the institution in several ways. For the annual summer Alumni Reunion, we mounted and staffed an Archives exhibit of albums, yearbooks and student publications during the Library open house as we have for many years. This exhibit is quite popular with our alumni. We have contributed to the work of the Oral History Project as interviewers and in other ways. For the last two years we have also interviewed alumni during the alumni weekend and have collected some rich materials. In addition we mounted a special exhibit of post cards sent by IMSA students traveling abroad, and we mounted and staffed an exhibit about previous construction projects during the IN2 groundbreaking ceremony and open house.

### **Conclusion:**

It has been a good year for Archives, and as we begin to look to next year, we are taking stock of what has been done so far and plan to move forward based on this year's accomplishments. We certainly expect to continue with the ongoing work of the Archives in maintaining and strengthening our current collections, and in building new ones. Our emphasis will again be on adding materials to DC. Given the number of requests for photographs during this year we will prioritize the scanning, especially of slides, which can be done with student workers. We certainly expect to maintain our regular open hours and we expect to continue our work during alumni and other IMSA events.

In addition we plan to launch several new initiatives. We hope to make available Independent Study and an Intersession to a few students that would provide opportunities for guided research in the Archives. There are parts of the IMSA story just waiting to get written. In addition in an effort to broaden awareness and interest in the Archives' holdings we will give two Archive talks highlighting a particular collection like "Student Council" or one of the photograph collections. The exhibit we mounted last fall was quite successful and we would like to do two such exhibits on different topics, one each semester, next year.

Respectfully submitted:

Marti Guarin, M.S.L.S.  
IMSA Staff Ambassador and Charter Librarian and Archivist

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IMSA History Faculty Emeritus

## Addenda

### IMSA Archives Access Policy (from the former website)

The Archives of the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy follow accepted archival practices for organization and access. Materials are those generated at IMSA and by members of the IMSA community. Many items in the collection are unique, and increase in value as time passes. The goal of the Archives is to interpret the life of the institution, its programs, and its staff and students, and educate the IMSA community and the public about the history of the Academy.

Users of material are expected to credit the IMSA Archives in their works and in reproduction of materials from the Archives. A copy of such work will be deposited in the Archives.

The IMSA Archives is housed in the IRC. Access is by appointment. Materials are to be used in the IRC. Access to some materials, such as nonpublic records of current staff, is restricted.

Materials sought are those generated by members of the IMSA community. All accession decisions are made by staff based on the research value of the collection, relation to overall holdings, its condition, and resources required to process, store, access and interpret the collection.

### The IMSA Archives Collects...

*both the routine and the exceptional  
evocative of the life of the IMSA community*

- Student work: papers, graphics, projects
- Assignments, syllabi
- Photos, especially with identification
- Publications, especially departmental & student
- Yearbooks
- Clippings and notes from professional journals (IMSA has a newspaper clipping service)
- Journals, writings on the IMSA experience
- Materials from students contests & competitions: what it was, when, why, who competed, how did they do?
- Notices and citations from professional awards
- Memos, minutes, records
- Announcements, materials, schedules and assignments from special programs
- Materials from student clubs & societies and Student Council
- Materials on the experience of being an IMSA parent
- Materials reflective of the alumni experience since IMSA