

RTF student works to archive UWO history

by **Danielle Beyer - Friday, April 06, 2012**

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/18016/rtf-student-works-to-archive-uwo-history/>

For going on two years now, Student Titan Employment Program (STEP) student Tyler Frodl has been sorting through stacks of old film and tapes to create an archive of moving history at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.

Along with Director of Television Services Justine Stokes, Frodl, a junior radio-TV-film major, began the long process of archiving old material that was just taking up space in the RTF department.

“There was a small room full of old equipment and just piles and boxes of tape,” Frodl said. “Many of the stacks were higher than I am tall. Everything was spread all over the place, sometimes in boxes and many times not labeled.”

According to Stokes, no similar archive had existed at UW Oshkosh up until this point. Even the material RTF students are producing now is, at best, just put on DVD and stuck in a binder, Stokes said.

“As you can imagine, 19-year-olds don’t label well, either today or yesterday,” Stokes said. “So that was the first step.”

Frodl and Stokes have now converted an old film editing room into the archive for the University. The next step in the process is to figure out what all of the old film and tapes contain.

“The hardest part is getting everything running because it’s all on stuff we don’t use anymore,” Frodl said. “We have tapes as far back as ’71, and then film starts. So I had to learn to hand-edit film as well, because we don’t use that anymore.”

So far, Frodl’s most interesting finds include the oldest know footage of Titan football, numerous chancellor reports, a complete TV series from the 1970s and *Exit Dying*, a movie filmed in Oshkosh by RTF students.

Many pieces, *Exit Dying* included, have been set aside because Frodl and Stokes are unsure of their importance or relevance to campus history. But since Frodl discovered *Exit Dying*, he said he’s actually had numerous requests for the movie from alumni.

“It was always a joke among us – ‘Why do we keep *Exit Dying*?’” Frodl said. “But then an alum showed up asking about it. When we gave her the copy she just started crying because a friend of hers who had worked on it had just passed away, and she had never gotten to see the film before.”

Stokes added that the same woman had previously tried to hunt down the film, but no one in the department could help her or knew what it was.

“It was a real instance of the work mattering,” Stokes said. “I think a lot of people just think it’s crazy what Frodl does. But it’s the history of this program and it’s the history of the University.”

Along with deciphering what they already have, Frodl and Stokes are also asking alumni for any old film or tapes they may have. In exchange for being able to keep the original material in the archives, Frodl will transfer it to DVD so alumni can actually view the footage.

Read more:

- [STEP student profiles](#)
- [UW Oshkosh alum worked behind the scenes on re-released 'Titanic'](#)