

The Annals of the Southern Utah Mission: Grant Report

Dr. Aaron McArthur
Department of History and Political Science
9 December 2014

This final report addresses the results of a professional enhancement project funded by an ATU Professional Development Grant. The project was approved in mid-2013, and completed in late 2014. I received \$1093 in the form of a PDG, plus \$500 from A & H College funds. This report follows the instructions provided in the Guidelines for Professional Development Grants.

A: Title Page (see above)

B: Restatement of Professional Enhancement Opportunity

The Annals of the Southern Utah Mission is a 2250 page hand written history of what is now southern Utah, southern Nevada and northern Arizona from the years 1849 to 1900, produced by James G. Bleak, the secretary of the mission for four of the five decades it covers. It is the single best primary source for the history of that region, but it is very hard to work with. I received a Professional Development Grant from ATU in the Summer of 2013 to complete an independent verification of my transcript as needed for endorsement from the National Historical Publications & Records Commission of the National Archives. The money was used to pay a student worker to assist in the process. The funds were also used to purchase professional indexing software. By hiring a student to assist, the project had the additional benefit of providing practical experience in editing and publishing.

C: Review of Professional Enhancement Opportunity

Initially, I had the student hired to assist in the project come to my office and read the original out loud while I followed along in the typescript. After a few weeks, we began having the student record her reading which I would play back later. This allowed us to work asynchronously on the project. The student eventually produced over 120 hours of recordings. Using transcribing software, I was able to play the files back at 225% speed to work more efficiently. We were able to review all 2250 pages of the manuscript, which

works out to 726 single-spaced pages of typescript, within the time planned for the project. My project co-editor completed another complete verification during the same time period as well. In December, I sent the completed, edited, and verified typescript to Kofford Books (<http://gregkofford.com/>) where it is under contract for publication. The indexing software will be used once the press returns the page proofs for indexing. In the meantime, I used the software to work on the index for my book *St. Thomas, Nevada: A History Uncovered* at the University of Nevada Press.

D: Summary of Experiences

To summarize, the grant allowed me to:

- Hire a student worker, providing paid experience in editing and publishing.
- Verify the entire typescript.
- Prepare the typescript for publication.
- Provide experience in a professional field that I have great interest in.
- Index another book for publication.

E: Conclusions and Recommendations

The grant has proved to be incredibly useful to me. I am very grateful for the funds that allowed me to finish this project which I have been working on since 2007. Without the funds, I would still not be done with it. It allowed me to recruit a student who could devote enough hours to the project to bring it to completion. The completion of the transcript is very good for my publishing agenda and for my career.

The grant has also provided my student workers with valuable work experience on an important project. They received experience in editing and publishing. This helps develop the reputation of ATU as a place to learn and hone public history skills.

Both of these developments were made possible by the Professional Development Grant. As concrete evidence of the good the grant has produced, I have included a digital copy of the finished transcript with this report. Thank you for your support.