

## AHC Mission and Vision Statement

20 July 2003

The American Heritage Center (AHC) is the repository for the University of Wyoming's (UW) special collections and archives, including the university's rare books library and one of the largest manuscript collections in the U.S.

**Our mission is to preserve a clearly defined set of primary sources and rare books--reflecting the written, image, and audio history of Wyoming, the Rocky Mountain Region, and select aspects of the American past--and to make those sources accessible to all. Our diverse collections support casual inquiry and international scholarship; most importantly, we play an active and creative role in the teaching and research missions of the University.**

*Our Vision: The American Heritage Center aspires to be widely acknowledged—by the University community, by the people of Wyoming, by scholars world-wide, and by our professional peers--as one of the nation's finest special collections repositories, bringing international distinction to the University of Wyoming by advancing scholarly research and education at the university and beyond.*

To fulfill our mission & achieve our vision we will provide, and be acknowledged as providing:

- **Clearly defined breadth in our collections** which, while emphasizing the distinctive culture of the Mountain West, will also reflect the rich array of cultures that characterize both the diversity of the curriculum and the broader world that our students will enter;
- **Outstanding curricular support at both the undergraduate and graduate levels**, in an unusually wide variety of departments and colleges at the university, taking full advantage of the breadth of our collections.
  - **Personalized, connected instruction for students** that introduces them to the intellectual, creative, and logistical challenges of doing original research with primary sources;
  - **For faculty, a laboratory for interdisciplinary inquiry and an incubator for creative teaching;**
- **An unusually inviting atmosphere**, welcoming students, scholars, and the public, and a service-oriented faculty and staff who are enthusiastic and dedicated to assisting researchers (novices and experts alike) access, understand, and appreciate our collections;
- **Wide recognition for the university** as a draw for national and international researchers, as an active forum for scholarly discourse, and as a respected contributor to public historical programming (such as documentaries);
- **A faculty and staff who are expert professionals and educators**—leaders in the North American archival and special libraries professions; educators, who teach and present widely to a broad and diverse audience through lectures, courses, symposia, articles, and web sites, and through the creation of catalogs, guides, and exhibitions;

- **An active program of outreach and service to the state**, including K-12 teachers and students, promoting historical literacy, competence, and engagement;
- **A national model of collection development, management, and cataloging**, statewide leadership on the complex issues surrounding electronic source material--their generation, assessment, preservation, and long-term utility--and broad leadership in state and regional cultural and historical activities;
- **The necessary archival and records management expertise** to support the university's obligation to be transparent and accountable to the citizens of Wyoming, and;
- **Proper physical security and environmental controls for our collections**, and conservation expertise for a variety of cultural collections on campus.