



# THE INNOVATORS GUIDE

## **DIGITIZING STUDENT WORK, SUCH AS AN ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

Top tips from Michael K. Honey, professor in Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at UW Tacoma, about how best to bring student stories to a wider audience

### **1** Start with funding

Digitizing a large collection is an expensive task, so Honey procured funding from Friends of the UW Libraries and the Puyallup Tribe of Indians.

### **2** Strike key partnerships

Honey partnered with Justin Wadland, head of Media and Digital Collections at UW Tacoma. The library provided the expertise and the people to create an online digital collection that is easy to use and readily available. Michael Sullivan, an architect, preservationist and historian, also works with Honey in developing and teaching the course.

The library sought permission from former students, and their interview subjects and families, to publish their materials. It is quite a bit of work because each oral history is accompanied by a research essay, interview recordings, primary and secondary sources and other key documents created by students.

### **3** Make students realize they are a part of something big

"I tell my students that as a historian, you want to get as close to the truth as you can. We can help preserve history by talking to people who have played an active role in their communities but have been overlooked for one reason or another. As students, they can contribute a great deal of understanding about our communities. What they do in my class will live on, and so will the stories of the people they interview," Honey says.

#### **Resources:**

- The UW Tacoma library guide to [Honey's class](#) and the [Tacoma Community History Project](#)
- Professor Jim Gregory at UW's Seattle campus has a [parallel oral history project](#)
- [Digital Humanities](#) at the UW
- [Best Practices](#) by the Oral History Association

[Learn more about how Honey created a digital collection based on student work](#)