Guidelines for Archival Records to Donate

An organization’s archives should preserve, in the smallest amount of records possible, documentation of its origins, purposes, major activities, significant accomplishments, and most important interactions with clients and/or other agencies. The following list highlights the common materials which usually make up an organization’s historical archives.

QUESTIONS? PLEASE CONTACT THE WSJHS ARCHIVIST at (206) 543-1895

ORGANIZATIONAL RECORDS
Articles of Incorporation
By-laws

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS
Board of Directors Meeting Files
Conference & Convention Materials (sponsored by organization)
Correspondence (incoming and printouts of significant outgoing correspondence)
Committee Records (agendas, minutes, supplementary materials, etc.)
Job Descriptions
Membership lists
Memoranda to or from senior staff
Minutes of meetings (other bodies besides committees)
Organizational charts and historical summaries
Planning Files (strategic plans)
Organizational charts and historical summaries
Reports: Annual Reports
Financial Reports (end of year; not weekly or monthly)
Speeches and Writings
Subject Files

PUBLICATIONS & PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS
Awards
Books (by the company or employees; also about the company)
Brochures (pamphlets)
Clippings (newspaper and magazine articles)
Directories of the organization
Marketing and Public Relations Files
Newsletters
News Releases
Posters

SPECIAL FORMAT MATERIALS
Architectural Drawings and Plans
Audio Recordings
Photographs (prints, negatives)
Video Recordings (tape, film, digital media)
Scrapbooks
RECORDS WE CANNOT ACCEPT

Bank statements and canceled checks
Budget preparation records
Contracts
Correspondence—routine mailings and junk mail
Duplicates (keep 2 copies of printed or published materials, posters, etc.)
Expense reports, reimbursement requests
Grant proposals (not funded)
Insurance records of inactive policies
Letters accompanying donations and copies of checks
Monthly ledgers/journals, quarterly budget reports
Payroll files, rolls, ledgers
Personnel records
Phone messages
Publications, flyers, minutes of other organizations (if these may be the only evidence of a defunct community organization, they can be kept in correspondence or subject files)
Purchase orders
Receipts, bills, and invoices
Reference materials
Tax returns
Time sheets
Unsolicited job applications and resumes
Warranties and instructions for equipment

JA, 8/9/11