

Interns Provide Manpower Boost to NGEF Projects

The National Guard Educational Foundation received a much-needed manpower boost the past few months.

Carl Young, Dan Snowdall and Zayna Bizri, graduate students from the George Mason University history department, were assigned to write a mock grant as a final project for one of their classes. Young and Snowdall, both majors at the National Guard Bureau, asked Jonathan Bernstein, director of the National Guard Educational Foundation, if they, along with Bizri, could write an actual grant to benefit the museum.

Each compiled a grant for museum projects like the oral history program, digital archiving and exhibit expansion.

As the semester came to a close, Bizri inquired about internship possibilities at NGEF. For five weeks, she functioned as the museum's registrar, identifying, cataloging and preserving museum artifacts and processing new acquisitions for the collection.

She learned quickly that accepting an artifact donation is merely the first step in it becoming a museum object and that each piece must be identified, documented and have a solid collections file to maintain all of the historical information associated with that object. Bizri's internship officially ended last week, but she plans to stay on as a museum volunteer as her schedule permits over the next few months.

The contributions to the museum from Young, Snowdall and Bizri, with their time, knowledge and love of history, have been a welcome and much needed boost, Bernstein said.

Thanks to Young and Snowdall, the museum now has digital copies of the 1814 and 1836 Militia Drill Manuals. Bizri's collections work has enabled the museum to move forward with a standardized system for tracking the status of the artifacts. The grant work done by all three could result in funding for major NGEF projects over the next year.