



DIVISION OF RESEARCH PROGRAMS

## Narrative Section of a Successful Application

The attached document contains the grant narrative of a previously funded grant application, which conforms to a past set of grant guidelines. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the application guidelines for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Research Programs staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

Project Title: Eastern Cherokee Histories in Translation (ECHT)

Institution: Western Carolina University (Cullowhee, NC)

Project Director: Sara Snyder Hopkins

Grant Program: Scholarly Editions and Translations Program

## *Eastern Cherokee Histories in Translation (ECHT)*

### **Phase I: Defining and Developing**

### **Planning Grant Application Narrative for Scholarly Editions and Scholarly Translation (NEH)**

**Sara Snyder Hopkins, Project Director**

### **Significance and Impact**

Developing Eastern Cherokee Histories in Translation (ECHT) is a project to collect, translate, and annotate handwritten Eastern Cherokee social documents as a series of printed critical editions with interactive digital components. We are seeking funding from the NEH as a planning grant to support phase one of the project in which we will determine the overall scope and corpus, a site for hosting digital components, and plans for print dissemination. The archival materials under consideration stand as the largest body of existing Cherokee documents that articulate the history of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) from the mid-nineteenth century through the early twentieth century from a Cherokee perspective in the Cherokee language. However, this perspective is inaccessible for all but a handful of fluent, literate Cherokee speakers because only a small fraction of these documents has been translated into English. The long-term goals of ECHT are to bring these texts into dialogue with other written and oral histories through critical annotation and contextualization apparatuses and make these materials accessible to future tribal members and historians of the EBCI, Appalachia, and the American Southeast. Our approach is historical and documentarian but made possible through decades of linguistic training in the Cherokee language that is ethnographically based and builds upon longstanding collaborative relationships with the EBCI, one of three federally recognized Cherokee tribes.

This project will contribute to Cherokee historical literature because Eastern Cherokee history is substantially less documented and narrativized than Western Cherokee history. Following the forced removal of Southeastern Indian nations in 1838 known as the “Trail of Tears,” the original Cherokee Nation of 16,000 people ultimately fragmented into three federally-recognized tribes: the “western” Cherokee Nation and United Keetowah band in Oklahoma and the Eastern Band of Cherokees in North Carolina. The EBCI was formed from a small population of less than a thousand Cherokees who negotiated with the federal government and the state of North Carolina to remain in North Carolina, eventually consolidating tribal lands into a federal land trust comprised of several tracts. The largest tract is known as the Qualla Boundary and contains the town of Cherokee proper along with several subcommunities. Contemporary EBCI enrollment stands at around 16,000 members. This contrasts sharply with the 400,000 members of the Cherokee Nation, though less than 2,000 speak the Cherokee language. The disparity in populations reflects the number of people who lived in the respective communities following Removal; however, the fact that Cherokee Nation does not have a blood quantum limit for tribal enrollment is perhaps the greater factor affecting enrollment numbers. These factors also explain why there have been many more histories written about the Cherokee Nation in the post-Removal period whereas EBCI histories of this period are few.

Many members of the original Cherokee Nation were literate in the Cherokee language following the introduction of Sequoyah’s syllabary in 1819 followed by a national press in 1828. A bilingual tribal newspaper, the Cherokee Phoenix, began circulating in 1828 and Christian

religious texts were among the first literature printed. Cherokees quickly realized the utility of writing in the syllabary and began writing documents by hand. These texts included legal agreements, minutes of community meetings, personal letters, and traditional medicinal texts. Writing in the syllabary enabled Cherokee language speakers to keep records of important information and events. In the lead up to Removal, the state of Georgia seized the Cherokee printing press in 1835 and the nascent literary tradition had to be rebuilt in the respective new nations after Removal. Separated across space and time, Eastern (North Carolina) and Western (Oklahoma) Cherokee communities developed different handwriting conventions and their dialects became increasingly distinct. Eastern Cherokees, lacking their own printing press, saw a marked decline in local print literature in the Cherokee language, but the use of the syllabary for handwritten records persisted. Our project centers on primary source Cherokee language documents from the post-Removal period through the early 20<sup>th</sup> century among North Carolina Cherokees. These documents are a treasure trove of information about Eastern Cherokee life following Removal and during important historical events such as the Civil War, World War I, tribal reorganization, and federal recognition as experienced and described through the eyes of Eastern Cherokee people.

The documents we are translating for ECHT are associated with two author-collectors. The first author is the source for a collection of archival documents colloquially known as *The Inoli Letters* containing materials written and collected by Eastern Cherokee scribe, Inoli (Blackfox). 19th century ethnologist James Mooney collected and produced materials, notes, and publications about the Eastern Cherokees numbering over 6,000 pages that are held at the Smithsonian Institution's National Anthropological Archives. Many of the materials he collected are now considered culturally sensitive and access to them is restricted. However, Mooney, working with Cherokee interpreter Will West Long, also collected a number of social documents handwritten in the Cherokee language. Social documents are not considered culturally sensitive, though they have historically held little interest for anthropologists perhaps because they reflected what they perceived as "acculturated" cultural features. The particular collection from James Mooney that we are working with is a subset of letters and papers in the Cherokee language that were received or written by Inoli between 1848 and his death in 1888. In *The Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*, Mooney describes Inoli as "speaking no English, and in the course of a long lifetime he had filled almost every position of honor among his people, including those of councilor, keeper of the townhouse records, Sunday-school leader, conjurer, officer in the Confederate service, and Methodist preacher, at last dying, as he was born, in the ancient faith of his forefathers." The principal translator we are contracting for this project, Wiggins Blackfox, is the great-grandson of Inoli.

The second set of materials is associated with Will West Long, who was Mooney's interpreter during the 1880s through early 1900s. Long was a prodigious scribe and culture-bearer in his own right. Anthropologist John Witthoft described Long in a moving tribute published in *American Anthropologist* in 1948 following Long's death in 1947. He wrote, "Will's knowledge of Cherokee culture and his ability in the interpretation of the Cherokee language were second to none, and he had participated in almost every study of either subject pursued during the past sixty years. His life spanned the period of most intense culture change and social unrest among his people, and his death leaves me with a sense of opportunity neglected and data lost; a great body of information and an extremely interesting and significant series of observations on white and Cherokee cultures and their interaction died with Will. A long chain of friendships with scholars, artists, and interested persons and his vital, if

inconspicuous, role in reservation affairs testify to his unusual character and abilities.” Long was a public intellectual educated at Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute (now Hampton University) whose collaboration with several generations of anthropologists – James Mooney, Frank Speck, Franz Olbrechts, William Gilbert, John Witthoft, and others – interpreted Cherokee life and culture for a broader American audience. In this respect his contributions are akin to other indigenous scholars of his generation such as Charles Eastman, Gertrude Bonnin, and Luther Stand Bear, albeit less well known. While Long’s cultural knowledge and scholarly contributions were known to scholars, virtually none have shown interest in the quotidian accounts contained within the hundreds of pages of his diaries. We have been able to identify only a single entry from Long’s diaries that was translated and published by Speck and Schaffer in 1945. Long’s journals therefore stand as a monumental untapped resource for studying Cherokee society at the turn of the 20th century.

While translating these documents will provide great primary sources for historical study, we also intend for this work to elevate Inoli and Will West Long as indigenous authors and literary figures in their own rights. By making their words accessible through translation, their unique indigenous perspectives will be conveyed to future generations. Translation of these materials is especially vital because the Cherokee language is deeply endangered. Literacy in the syllabary declined with the overall decline of Cherokee language use in public and private spheres through the latter half of the 20th century. The majority of living Eastern Cherokee speakers did not learn to read the syllabary as children. Many who work as Cherokee language teachers or translators acquired literacy through study as adults, beginning with the print version of syllabary. Cherokee handwriting often diverges drastically from the print version of the Cherokee syllabary and requires a fair amount of study to reliably decipher. Given this situation, the fact that the vast majority of these documents have rested, untranslated, in archives for over a hundred years is not as surprising as one would initially think. Now, with fewer than 160 first-language speakers of the Eastern Cherokee dialect still living, many of the remaining Eastern Cherokee speakers are motivated to translate these materials without delay for future generations to learn from them.

Western Carolina University, located 18 miles from the EBCI’s federal land trust, has a longstanding institutional partnership with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. Specifically, the Cherokee Language and Cherokee Studies Programs have engaged in many collaborative projects with the EBCI relating to Cherokee language and culture. Our team is presently working with the EBCI Tribal Archivist and Cultural Resource Officer, who works under the auspices of the Kituwah Preservation and Education Program, to establish a system for evaluating documents for inclusion in this project that are contained within collections that are restricted due to culturally sensitive content. Our work is governed by a formal Memorandum of Agreement between the EBCI and WCU that stipulates the terms of our collaborative relationship with respect to Cherokee language and culture initiatives. With NEH’s support for the planning phase of ECHT, we will continue to build our collaborative partnership workflows, scope the collections, and develop a press prospectus for the proposed series and identify a potential publisher.

## **History of the Project and Productivity**

The roots of this project began more than a decade ago when former EBCI Tribal Resources Officer, TJ Holland, and other representatives from the Eastern Band worked in collaboration with the American Philosophical Society, the Smithsonian, the Museum of the Cherokee Indian,

and Western Carolina University Cherokee language instructor, Thomas Belt, to assess and repatriate (through digital copies) Cherokee language materials in archival institutions to the EBCI. The important work done by Holland, who died tragically in 2020 at the age of 44, and his collaborators made EBCI members and language scholars more aware of the Eastern Cherokee materials available in archival collections. Many materials were digitized and identified as culturally sensitive or not at that time, but there are still Eastern Cherokee archival materials remaining to be rediscovered, assessed, and repatriated. Unfortunately, no Cherokee language program or translation team has yet been able to dedicate the human resources required to translate those materials. As such, the proposed project contributes to the longstanding work of repatriating Cherokee language materials to the Eastern Band by making them discernible and relevant to the Cherokee people and those interested in their history and language.

A renewed interest in Eastern Cherokee historical materials developed organically among Cherokee language speakers contracted by the Cherokee Language Program at Western Carolina University to translate a selection of historical Cherokee language documents for Justin Morell, a Cherokee descendent and composer who is incorporating excerpts from Cherokee texts into a musical composition. The Cherokee translators were deeply invested in that work, recognizing a depth of EBCI historical information around which they were able to share stories and memories based in the local community. The speakers requested that we continue translating and engaging with historical Eastern Cherokee language materials beyond that initial work. As we began to look at the archival materials that were available, we were increasingly surprised by the sheer volume of content that had never been translated. We determined that a series of scholarly editions of Eastern Cherokee social documents would be a watershed contribution to the study and preservation of Eastern Cherokee history as well as an important contribution to documenting and preserving the Eastern dialect of the Cherokee language. We have identified a core collection of documents for initial translation; Inoli's letters and Will West Long's journals.

Excluded from this project are documents that cultural representatives from the EBCI have already deemed culturally sensitive such as traditional medical formulae and documents detailing traditional religious practices. What we *are* concerned with are documents that describe the seemingly mundane details of Eastern Cherokee life: church meetings; elections; tribal council treasurer reports; accounts of debts; land sales; accounts of military service; and accounts of historical events. Many of the materials document the political formation of the Eastern Band through their struggles with the federal government and Cherokee factionalism. The core body of original texts are housed at the Smithsonian Anthropological Archives, the American Philosophical Society, The Museum of the Cherokee Indian, and the Gilcrease Museum. Many of the documents are digitized and available for download, but some are presently not. We have identified and procured copies of hundreds of pages of publicly accessible documents and journal pages by Inoli and West Long whose contents are in the public domain. During the grant period, we will confirm any restrictions on copyrights, digital reproduction, and publication with the holding institutions. Some relevant collections are not available for reproduction by the general public because some items they contained were deemed culturally sensitive. Presently accessible documents in non-restricted collections will make up the bulk of our translation labors during the grant period while we collaborate with EBCI representatives to identify appropriate materials contained within collections with culturally sensitive materials.

Eastern Cherokee Histories in Translation will be a multi-year project estimated to be completed by 2027. With NEH's support during the planning grant award period we will contract Cherokee-speaking translators to help evaluate, summarize, and categorize texts for

defining the overall scope and organization. The urgency of translation due to the highly endangered status of the Cherokee language necessitates that we continue to prioritize translation work on these materials even as we formalize the overall project. Funding will also allow a team member to travel to the Smithsonian Anthropological Archives and the Gilcrease Museum to verify the corpus materials and further develop partnerships with their holding institutions. We also request summer financial support for our Project Director to finalize and submit a press prospectus for the series. Potential presses include, but are not limited to, (b) (4)

We anticipate the audience for the proposed series to be historians, Native American and Indigenous Studies scholars, ethnographers, and lay readers with an interest in Cherokee history and culture. The print series will prioritize accessibility of historical, cultural, and biographical content for English reading audiences. By contrast, the digital site will prioritize linguistic content for those interested in the materials' contributions to Cherokee language study. To this end, NEH's support will enable us to contract a software engineer and/or project administrator to adapt the open source DAILP (Digital Archive for Indigenous Language Persistence) platform to create a mockup for demonstrating the appearance and functionality of a digital repository site for this project. This engineer will work with WCU's Hunter Library to chart out plans for digital sustainability, modeled after those produced by DAILP with Northeastern University's library. We have already initiated discussions with WCU's Hunter Library about their capabilities for hosting the digital platform. A website for information about Eastern Cherokee Histories in Translations can be found at <https://affiliate.wcu.edu/echt/>.

## **Collaborators**

Sara Snyder Hopkins, Project Director, is Director of the Cherokee Language Program at Western Carolina University where she is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology and teaches courses in Cherokee language and linguistic anthropology. Hopkins is responsible for developing curriculum materials for Cherokee language courses and for facilitating collaboration between the language program and the EBCI. She obtained a PhD. in Ethnomusicology from Columbia University in 2016 where she also studied Linguistics and Linguistic Anthropology at NYU through the Inter-University Doctoral Consortium. Prior to coming to WCU, Hopkins spent six years as the music and arts teacher at New Kituwah Academy, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians' Cherokee language immersion school. This work was the subject of her doctoral dissertation, *Poetics, Performance, and Translation in Eastern Cherokee Language Revitalization*. Hopkins is currently editing a critical edition of the *Cherokee Singing Book* for the Sounding Spirit Series at Emory University (a recipient of awards through NEH's Scholarly Editions and Scholarly Translations grant program.) For the *Cherokee Singing Book* project, Hopkins collaborated with Cherokee first-language speakers to translate the 88-page quarto style text. She also conducted extensive primary source research to annotate the edition and write a scholarly introduction. Working closely with the series editors and research assistants for that project has given Hopkins a broad understanding of the process of producing a scholarly edition and translation as well as writing a press prospectus. Hopkins will dedicate sixteen hours per week to this project during the award period.

Brett Riggs, Project Collaborator, is Sequoyah Distinguished Professor of Cherokee Studies at Western Carolina University. He specializes in the archaeology and ethnohistory of the Cherokee and Catawba peoples, and regularly consults with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, and the Catawba Indian Nation to provide technical expertise and educational materials for tribal audiences. His studies of Removal-era Cherokee archaeology and documentary sources have guided the expansion of the NPS Trail of Tears National Historic Trail in North Carolina and Tennessee. Prior to joining Western Carolina University, Riggs was a research archaeologist and assistant professor in the Research Laboratories of Archaeology at the University of North Carolina, and previously served as deputy Tribal Historic Preservation Officer and archaeologist for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. Riggs serves on the executive committee of the National Trail of Tears Association, as well as the Native Affairs Liaison Committee of the Southeastern Archaeological Conference and the advisory board of the Friends of Junaluska (tribal museum).

Riggs has created and curated several Cherokee-focused museum exhibits, including “Native Americans of the Ducktown Basin” (Ducktown Basin Museum), “Masterpieces of Mechanics” (Frank H. McClung Museum), and “Aquohee” (Cherokee County Historical Museum), as well as an 18-site system of wayside interpretive exhibits for the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail in North Carolina. Most recently, he served as consultant to development of “The Story of Sequoyah,” featured exhibit at the Sequoyah Birthplace Museum, Vonore TN. Riggs is also co-author of the “Cherokee Heritage Trails Guidebook” (UNC Press) and has continued to work in development of this heritage tourism complex in western North Carolina by training tribal guides for bus tours. Riggs will contribute eight hours per week for this project during the planning phase.

Andrew Denson, Project Collaborator, is Professor of History at Western Carolina University and the director of the university's interdisciplinary Cherokee Studies Program. He is the author of *Demanding the Cherokee Nation: Indian Autonomy and American Culture, 1830-1900* (University of Nebraska Press, 2004) and *Monuments to Absence: Cherokee Removal and the Contest over Southern Memory* (University of North Carolina Press, 2017), as well as essays in various journals and edited collections. He holds a BA in History from the University of Illinois and an MA and PhD in History from Indiana University. His current research focuses on public memory and historical commemoration in the Native South. Denson will contribute four hours per week during the planning phase of this project.

Barnes Powell, Project Collaborator, is a graduate student in History MA program at Western Carolina University. He has also worked for the past two years as a Cherokee linguistics expert with the Kituwah Preservation and Education Program (KPEP) operated by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. For his work with the EBCI, Powell records conversations between Cherokee speakers in the Cherokee language and then transcribes them for language documentation. Powell has developed a close working partnership with Wiggins “Inoli” Blackfox, “Cherokee Speaker in Residence” at WCU (a contracted position) with whom he has translated and edited hundreds of pages of Cherokee language material on behalf of the EBCI and WCU. Powell received a BA with a double major in history and anthropology and a minor in Cherokee Studies from WCU in 2020. While an undergraduate student, Powell was awarded grants to complete two different Cherokee language-related summer research projects and was also a research assistant for projects directed by Brett Riggs and Sara Hopkins. Though he is currently a graduate student at WCU, Powell has also been a partner in the development of this project and brings a great deal of Cherokee language expertise and relationships with Cherokee

speakers. We have chosen to describe his qualifications here because he will continue to be a long-term collaborator for this project even if he graduates during the award period. His work will be vetted through the collaborative translation and annotation process described below. Powell will commit an average of sixteen hours per week to this project.

Rainy Brake is the Cherokee Language Instructor at WCU. Prior to this position she spent 10 years as an elementary school teacher for New Kituwah Academy, the EBCI's Cherokee immersion school. Brake received the Post-graduate Certificate in Cherokee Studies from WCU in 2009 as well as additional coursework in the MA in Teaching TESOL program. Though a second language learner, Brake is a conversationally-fluid Cherokee speaker and has years of experience collaborating with Cherokee speakers to produce curriculum materials. Brake will facilitate translation elicitation in collaboration with Cherokee first-language speakers for four hours per week to this project.

## **Methods and Execution**

Smithsonian Manuscript collection 2241 contains over 300 pages of Cherokee social documents that Mooney took from a collection of Inoli's papers his daughter had in her possession circa 1900. Smithsonian sub-collections 2241-a and 2241-c – are in the public domain and publicly accessible through the Smithsonian's digital collections. 2241-b, a 19-page sub-collection, is inaccessible at the Smithsonian due to containing culturally sensitive content; however, digital images of it are publicly available through the Museum of the Cherokee Indian's digital collection. We will consult with the EBCI Cultural Resources Officer on how to approach this sub-collection. We have already been working to translate many of the Inoli materials and they will form the basis for the first volume of our series. A small subset of these documents were previously translated by Jack and Anna Kilpatrick in the 1960s and published piecemeal in a few books and journal articles in various formats. The Kilpatricks were not Eastern Cherokees, and while our work will be in dialogue with theirs through annotations and citations, we feel that there will be relevant histories and connections to be made by revisiting their translations with Eastern Cherokee speakers today. The first volume of the series will translate and collect all known social documents associated with Inoli.

The second set of archival materials for this project is comprised of a series of diaries collected or written by Will West Long in the Cherokee syllabary. Seven of his journals are housed at the American Philosophical Society (APS) in the Frank G. Speck Cherokee collection. Their 900 handwritten pages span from 1897 to 1925. Three of the original journals are currently restricted by the APS due to containing culturally sensitive content, but four are open for study and accessible through their digital collections. These materials are public domain materials. The four digitally accessible texts comprise nearly 400 pages of diary entries, community meeting minutes, and accounting ledgers. We have obtained digital photos (from microfilm) of the remainder of West Long's journals from the Speck Cherokee collection from the Museum of the Cherokee Indian, but we will consult with the EBCI Cultural Resource Officer and the APS on how we can engage with those texts.

Further demonstrating how prolific Will West Long's writings are, there is another set of ten diaries and 100 pieces of paper in the Will West Long Collection (MC.1954.130) at the Gilcrease Museum. None have been translated and the subject matter of the contents is unknown. We recently inquired about those materials for this project and were informed by Gilcrease that the entire collection is currently inaccessible due to it including culturally sensitive content. We approached the EBCI Cultural Resource Officer with this information and he has initiated



discussion with the Gilcrease and representatives from the EBCI, including the great granddaughter of Will West Long, to repatriate these documents as digital copies. Our program is participating in those conversations as a collaborative partner. The Gilcrease has pledged to provide digital scans by the end of 2022. Once the tribe acquires them, we will consult with them as they develop an appropriate process to assess the materials and pull non-culturally sensitive materials from the collection for this project.

We have an established collaborative method for translating Cherokee language materials that we have implemented for several Cherokee language projects over the last several years. A team of one to two linguistically trained language scholars and two or three Cherokee speakers work together to generate and edit translations. Prior to the collaborative translation session, one of the language scholars transcribes the handwritten documents into MS Word documents. The transcriptions of the Cherokee syllabary are also transliterated into a “simple phonetic” phonological transcript that most speakers and learners are more proficient at reading. The phonetic transcription significantly speeds up the translation process. This typed document is presented at the translation session along with photocopies of the original. The translation team then sits together and talks through the translation. We record these sessions, with one team member entering collaboratively approved translations into the working digital document. This person also enters footnotes in the document of pertinent cultural, historical, or textual features noted during the discussion. These notes may become annotations themselves in the final text or material prompting primary source research for introductions, annotations, and essays. We convey alternative translations as footnotes. Words or phrases with unreliable translations are bracketed. For the print volumes, relevant historical and ethnographic contextual information will be provided in introductions to each document whereas tangentially relevant information and connections to other texts will be endnotes.

One of the challenges of working with handwritten Cherokee materials is that the authors did not reliably use sentences, commas, or other forms of punctuation. After the translation team creates a word-level translation, we go back and read the text with a consideration of Cherokee grammatical rules in order to determine where phrase and sentence divisions are likely to be so that we can generate a sentence-level English gloss. The speakers will write word-by-word translations and other notes on their photocopies and printed transcriptions as well. We collect their handwritten translations after each session and scan them as PDF files. We collect all the materials related to each document in a shared digital file folder on Microsoft Teams. These materials are also backed up on an external hard drive. Once we have modified the working translation file, we take the translations back to the team to review once more and to clarify any points of disagreement or revisit something that was unclear initially. When we encounter words or phrases that we cannot translate, we present the material to a different Cherokee speaker in the hopes that they may be able to provide a translation.

Our translations will be edited as a four-line gloss which is a common format for Cherokee language translations. The first line is an orthographic transcription of the handwritten syllabary from the original text. The second line is a phonological rendering in the commonly used “simple phonetics” that most Cherokee speakers and learners now use for reading and writing in the language. The third line is a word-level English gloss that aligns with each word in Cherokee. The fourth line is a sentence level gloss. We will not create a morphological gloss of the texts because it would be too lengthy and would add a substantial amount of labor and time toward completion. Moreover, the primary intention of the series is to make Cherokee historical texts accessible to general readers as well as scholars. Nonetheless, our word-level translations

will make it possible for scholars who study Cherokee linguistics to do morphemic analyses from the text. Moreover, the digital DAILP software platform that we plan to adapt for our project already has the capability to display a morphemic gloss which could be added as a future project. To this end, we prioritize semantic and grammatical equivalence as much as possible in the word-by-word translations while rendering a document-level translation that is accessible to English readers without knowledge of the structure of Cherokee language. We intend for our digital site to contain the word-by-word translations whereas the print editions will include only the full document translations.

We will use notes to indicate colloquialisms or further elucidate words not fully expressed by the English translation. For the print edition of our volumes, we will include transcriptions of the handwritten texts in printed Cherokee syllabary that follow the line and section breaks of the original documents, representing strike-throughs and other authorial marks with as much fidelity as possible. We will use footnotes for features that are not transferrable to transcription. Document-level translations will follow the transcriptions for each document or journal entry. The print editions will follow MLA standards for documentary editing including: a general introduction; footnotes for translation variants; explanatory annotations in endnotes; subject and person indices; a glossary of places, persons, and relevant culturally-specific concepts; and appendices. We will determine through consultation with the holding institutions if reproductions of the original texts will be included in the print editions or digital platform.

During the grant period we will explore implementation of a digital platform for the project in partnership with WCU's Hunter Library. We intend to adapt the open-source digital platform already developed by the Digital Archive of Indigenous Language Persistence (DAILP) – funded in part through NEH's Digital Humanities Advancements grant – to present digital components for this project. DAILP, hosted at Northeastern University, was created as a digital platform to display translations of Cherokee language historical documents for Cherokee language acquisition. DAILP's development is ongoing, and its current form can be viewed at [dailp.northeastern.edu](http://dailp.northeastern.edu). Our project director is currently a Research Associate with DAILP in a task force funded by the Henry Luce Foundation. The team is tasked with providing local data about Cherokee language learning that can be used to see ways that DAILP can support audiences and purposes for language learning. We will dialogue with the DAILP team about the possibilities for the platform to serve the needs of ECHT. By the end of the grant period, we will have a mockup of the digital site to share with our DAILP and EBCI community language partners to elicit their feedback and a plan for digital sustainability.

## **Work Plan**

Recognizing the complications of working with collections containing culturally sensitive materials, we have included ongoing dialogue with the EBCI and archival holding institutions in our workplan. A process for working with collections containing culturally sensitive materials may be in place prior to the start of the grant, but we feel it is important to represent ongoing communication with the tribe and institutional partners in our workplan because the EBCI should ultimately approve of the content and approach taken in the work. While our project team will not seek NEH funding for these conversations, we are requesting NEH support to pay our Cherokee-speaking contractors – our fluent speaking elders – to assess and approve or disapprove potential additional corpus materials in the process developed with the EBCI.

By the beginning of the award period, our team expects to have completed translations for 75% (approximately 225 pages) of the Inoli papers. During the award period, we will (1)

finish the remaining translations of the Inoli papers for an average rate of three pages per week; (2) edit the translations and initial annotations for the Inoli papers; and (3) determine the scope of the corpus for the Will West Long materials. Our translation teams will work toward translating the remaining untranslated Inoli materials during the award period. NEH funds will enable us to compensate Cherokee translators for these objectives.

We will be refining our dissemination strategy during the award period. We request NEH funds to assist in contracting a software engineer who can work with the open-source code of the DAILP software to create the initial mockup of a digital site for our project and engage on our behalf with WCU's Hunter Library to develop a concrete digital hosting and sustainability plan for the site. Furthermore, we seek one month of summer employment support from NEH to compensate our project director for time developing the materials to submit a press prospectus for the print series. See Attachment 2: Workplan for a detailed outline of the work to be undertaken during the award period.

### **Final Product and Dissemination**

To our knowledge the materials for the ECHT project are not under copyright; however, we will confirm this officially with the holding institutions when determining any other restrictions on their use or duplication during the grant period.

ECHT will be a combination of print editions with an accompanying digital platform. The proposed format for the print editions, as described above, will enable historical researchers and lay readers to read through the documents in English for primary source study preserving the original format as closely as possible in the transcriptions and translations. The print volumes are intended for historical and cultural study and therefore the translations provided for them will be document-level translations. As avid users ourselves of printed Cherokee reference books, we believe that printed reference materials continue to be an important means for preserving knowledge for future generations. Given the relatively recent development of digital repositories and resources, we do not yet know the true longevity of these types of platforms. We are personally aware of instances at other institutions where digital Cherokee language resources have not been sustained; websites have disappeared with changing technologies and drives of digital files have gone missing during changes of leadership. Digital resources are often housed at a single institution and rely upon continued maintenance and integration as web programming evolves. Even the most well-intentioned digital sustainability plans may not be enough to preserve knowledge indefinitely. By contrast, printed reference materials can be held at multiple institutions for continued access irrespective of technological change and transitions of leadership.

Nonetheless, we also recognize the value of searchable digital texts for ease of research and language study. Eastern Cherokee Histories in Translation will produce an extraordinary corpus for Eastern Cherokee language learning and preservation. Thus, we propose to establish a searchable online repository of our more granular word-by-word translations and four-line glosses that can include audio recordings of the texts read by Cherokee speakers. The format can also accommodate more detailed linguistic analyses in the future. For these reasons, we believe pairing print editions with a digital repository offers the best of both worlds: long-term preservation plus maximum accessibility and usability.