Internship Opportunity – Cory Library, South Africa

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Grahamstown, South Africa
Grahamstown is a city of 125,000 in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. It is a small town that is very safe. In fact, Grahamstown is known as the City of Saints on account of the many churches located there. The Grahamstown LDS branch is located just 2 kilometers away from Rhodes University.

Rhodes University
Rhodes, a public research university located in the heart of Grahamstown, is the province’s oldest university. The language of instruction is English; it is sometimes called “Cambridge in the Bush.” Cory Library will assist interns in finding accommodations in the area.

Cory Research Library
Cory Library is the prime custodian of the history and heritage of the Eastern Cape, holding vast book and archive collections stretching back to the early 1800s. For this reason Cory is world renowned and draw researchers from all over. Cory’s holdings are categorized as follows:

1. Books and manuscript materials on the Eastern Cape, including the frontier as a space of military engagement and cultural exchange;
2. Records of missions and churches, which hold a wealth of information on black history;
3. Church registers which hold a wealth of genealogical data;
4. Southern African materials that are suited for Political Science, History, Anthropology, Sociology students and indeed for those who want to tackle inter-disciplinary or trans-disciplinary studies.

Junior or senior history students coming into internship at Cory would be “employed” to:

- Attend to requests for archive collections, working with our catalogues, accession registers and finding aids. This way they will learn how primary materials are organized to facilitate research, and find out how the “strangest” pieces of evidence could constitute vital historical evidence
- Process deposits into collections – this will involve interrogating manuscript materials, organizing the items into thematic categories, writing the synopsis, writing the meta-data for documents in the various folders, and writing the finding aid in the process. This may seem a rather dry technical exercise but it actually involves intellectual work about what constitutes historical evidence, putting questions to a document and finding answers, thinking about how a researcher might come at a topic, and then facilitating the researcher’s work. In this process the intern becomes a historical thinker. This exercise of working with evidence is especially suitable for historians, journalists and lawyers.
- At the same time, the student could work on his or her honors thesis. We have sufficient material to “support” almost any topic in Eastern Cape or southern African history, politics, sociology, etc.

Your students will not need knowledge of another language as we allocate the materials in isiXhosa to speakers of that language. In any case, our collections of isiXhosa materials, although important, are rather small.