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## **LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT FUNDS PUBLIC ACCESS TO SHOAH FOUNDATION ARCHIVE**

Los Angeles, CA; January 15, 2004 - Four grants to index and digitize Holocaust survivor and witness testimonies recorded by the Shoah Foundation in the state of California were awarded to the Foundation by the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services via the California State Library.

California is home to the second-largest community of Holocaust survivors in the United States. The Shoah Foundation archive contains more than 3,900 interviews videotaped in 291 cities throughout California.

The grants support a partnership between the Foundation and University of Southern California (USC), which enables USC to be among the first library systems in the country to offer academic and public access to this priceless resource of eyewitness accounts. The funding helps speed access to the California testimonies at USC, where students, educators and researchers can now view them on campus through Internet2, a secure network separate from the World Wide Web that links 200 universities.

This project encourages a wide range of research that will allow future generations to learn about the Holocaust and about California as a place of refuge after World War II. The testimonies in the Shoah Foundation archive include descriptions of the individuals' coming to America and will be an asset in the study of the immigrant experience in California and of the impact of immigration on the state.

In addition to teaching about the Holocaust and California immigrants, the testimonies provide a useful cross-reference tool in the study of hate crimes and group prejudice and will encourage the development of other oral and visual history projects and collections to benefit the state's diverse populations.

Filmmaker Steven Spielberg established Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation in 1994. Since then, the Foundation has videotaped testimonies in 56 countries and in 32 languages. Today, the Shoah Foundation endeavors to overcome prejudice, intolerance, and bigotry—and the suffering they cause—through the educational use of the Foundation's visual history testimonies. To this end, the Foundation partners with organizations around the world to incorporate testimonies into classroom lessons and museum exhibits, to create educational products, and to preserve, and provide access to, the entire visual history archive.

Individuals interested in supporting the Shoah Foundation are encouraged to call 818/777-4673 or write to PO Box 3168, Los Angeles, California, 90078-3168. For more information, visit the Foundation's homepage at [www.vhf.org](http://www.vhf.org).

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