

# Documenting Family Medicine, From Word to Web

## ARCHIVERA

### Success Story

#### THE CENTER FOR THE HISTORY OF FAMILY MEDICINE CHALLENGES

- Single Web-based venue for housing and managing information about three different collections
- Reliable vendor support, including SaaS
- All-in-one reporting capability
- Multimedia and digital capabilities
- Mobile access, 24/7/365 to support remote workers and researchers

*“I would absolutely recommend ArchivEra to any solo archivist who wears many hats, and to any small archival organization wanting to increase visibility and impact.”*

#### Crystal Bauer

Manager

Center for the History of Family Medicine

The American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation serves as the philanthropic arm of the American Academy of Family Physicians. Its mission is to advance the values of Family Medicine through humanitarian, educational and scientific philanthropy dedicated to improving health. The Center for the History of Family Medicine (CHFM), within the Foundation, is the primary repository of information and resources on the history and evolution of general practice, family practice and the specialty of family medicine in the United States.

The CHFM fills three roles, as:

- A historical research library, holding published works on Family Medicine as well as books by or about family physicians
- An archive, serving as the official repository for both the records of the major family medicine organizations and leaders within the specialty

- A museum, featuring artifacts and exhibits from the earliest days of general practice up to the present day’s specialty of family medicine

CHFM’s vision, as the collective memory of the specialty, is to play a major role in informing through history the transformation and future of Family Medicine. Its mission is to serve as the principal resource center for the collection, conservation, study, exhibition and dissemination of materials relating to the evolving history of Family Medicine in the United States.

Crystal Bauer, MLS, is the Manager of the Center for the History of Family Medicine, and as a solo archivist with the part-time support of three volunteers and a yearly internship, drives that vision and mission forward—now with a solid foundation enabled by the ArchivEra collections management system.

The CHFM library has a small collection of 1,500 rare books focused on general and family medicine. There is also a small museum, while the Center’s largest collection forms the archive. This comprises record collections from the AAFP and its many “sister” family medicine organizations, as well as individual collections from doctors with materials related to their careers in family practice.

#### FROM WORD TO THE WEB

Prior to implementing ArchivEra, the CHFM provided researchers with a Word document that served as the “go to” list of everything in the collections. Because it’s static, it didn’t really help users find what they were looking for, especially with regard to the archival collection. They needed a Web-based CMS that would enable them to make everything searchable, increase visibility, and allow them to organize the archive in a much better way for users. Ms. Bauer worked with the IT department and evaluated 6 CMS options, ultimately selecting ArchivEra. The factors that influenced and cemented their choice were ease of use, the ability to handle library and museum collections as well as the archival collections, the flexibility required to build their own fields and formats, and vendor support—particularly valuable given the Center’s limited staff. With input from IT, Ms. Bauer selected Lucidea’s Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) option, and she reports that they “love it”.

## INCREASING IMPACT

Ms. Bauer remarked that the Center's focus on sharing the history of family medicine is grounded in the belief that "Looking forward, we need to look to the past. If we can provide more visibility into our collections for researchers that's key." The Center's researchers are students, residents, residency program directors, and practicing family practitioners. They currently access the static catalog, and then they reach out to her for follow up. Ms. Bauer is a solo archivist, and is looking forward to opening up an ArchivEra external portal to the Center's users once records for the entire collection have been input. While a CMS is certainly more expensive than maintaining a Word document, "... the benefits of accessibility outweigh financial factors. ArchivEra simply makes everything more manageable for a one-person staff." In addition to opening the external portal, Ms. Bauer looks forward to leveraging ArchivEra's accessions capabilities. Being able to integrate accessions and their donor records—previously two separate systems—will save a lot of staff time, long term.

Their implementation of ArchivEra turned out to be very timely. Collection records must be entered manually given the lack of a previous system; the CHFM intern is entering information from the library and museum collections, while Ms. Bauer is inputting the archival collections records herself. ArchivEra allows them to work remotely, critical during COVID, and because it was "incredibly easy" to learn, they were up and running in no time, with very little follow up training required.

While time-consuming, the data entry process affords Ms. Bauer the opportunity to look closely and critically at the archival collections and reflect on the structure. It has been "... a great opportunity to reflect on archival arrangement."

## CAPTURING CONVERSATIONS

Per Ms. Bauer, they have a "robust" oral history collection, including audio cassettes, CDs, and digital recordings. A portion of this collection is being built out currently, as a result of the COVID pandemic. Ms. Bauer stated that "The pandemic is a huge historical event and it's really having an impact on family medicine. We want to capture what's going on now, while it's happening, while it's fresh." To obtain COVID 19 oral histories—of value now and for the future—Bauer is conducting brief interviews with family medicine doctors, faculty members, and students. While perspectives differ, common themes are coming through: Healthcare disparities are rampant, telemedicine offers benefits, and healthcare providers must also take care of themselves.

For Ms. Bauer, the oral history collection is one of the most enjoyable of the Center's resources. She especially appreciates the anecdotes about the role of the everyday family physician, finding it interesting to look at what "a day in the life" was like; what worked for them in practice, versus what has not. This year's COVID 19 oral history was conducted via videoconference, with the help of a medical student, who offered a different perspective as an interviewer. Ms. Bauer remarked that when COVID first appeared, there were many

comparisons to the "Spanish Flu". There were many diary accounts written 100 years ago, but what form does today's diary take? It's digital. Ultimately, CHFM's COVID oral histories will be available via SoundCloud—with links provided within ArchivEra.

## IMPRESSING THE BOARD

The multimedia capabilities of the system were a huge selling point; once their external portal is launched, the ability to offer images, recordings, links, and files of all types will cut down on request handling time—another boon for a lone arranger. But with ArchivEra, Ms. Bauer will still track users, usage levels and usage of specific resources, as well as the number of requests. Being able to gather statistics and generate reports all within a single venue was another selling point. The reports are shared with the AAFP Foundation's Board, all members of which are "incredibly excited" about the CMS project. Having seized the opportunity to make the CHFM increasingly visible as part of the Foundation is viewed very favorably.

The American Academy of Family Physicians provides Continuing Medication Education (CME) for family medicine practitioners, and recently celebrated milestones of some of their CME resources. Because Ms. Bauer pulled some early resources for them which showed where and how the Academy began, they were able to look at their history as it pertains to diversity, membership, and its chapter organizations back to the 1940s and 1950s, and see and celebrate how it has evolved.

In conclusion, Ms. Bauer told us that she would recommend Lucidea and ArchivEra to her peers because in addition to the great capabilities of the CMS, working with us is "easy, productive, and professional." She notes that Client Services team members are great instructors and trainers, always follow up quickly and thoroughly, are creative when solving issues, and actually have archival subject matter expertise, not just software knowledge.

ArchivEra is helping the CHFM move its collection records from Word, to the Web—ultimately making them accessible to the world.

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## ABOUT LUCIDEA

Lucidea provides unrivaled archival collections management software, with innovative tools based on observing archives of all sizes for 25 years. Lucidea's powerful web-based CMS, ArchivEra, is purpose-built, enabling archives large, small, or middling to describe and provide access to historical materials, save time and resources, and adhere to archival standards.

To learn more about ArchivEra and how it can help solve your archival collections management challenges, visit [lucidea.com/archivera](https://lucidea.com/archivera)

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