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Shoah archives at FAU

Videos sent from USC Shoah Foundation Archive Center

By David A. Schwartz, Staff Writer

Ruth Salton sat in a room at the Florida Atlantic University library in [Boca Raton](#) and watched the Holocaust testimony she videotaped with the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation more than a decade ago.

Filmmaker Stephen Spielberg started the Foundation in the early 1990s following the release of the movie "Schindler's List" to record testimonies by Holocaust survivors and other witnesses.

The project, which was completed in 2000 after six years, has almost 52,000 testimonies, including more than 3,200 by survivors living in Florida.

Now the entire collection can be viewed at FAU's LEAH USC Shoah Foundation Institute Visual History Archive Center, one of 17 Centers at universities in the United States. The University of South Florida in Tampa is the only other educational institution in Florida with access to the archives.

The interviews can be viewed at only eight other Centers around the world, including Yad Vashem in Israel and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

Funding for the FAU Archive Center came from LEAH (League for Educational Awareness of the Holocaust), a local nonprofit organization founded in 1996 to educate Florida school children about the Holocaust and to eliminate prejudice and hatred.

"People can go into the reference library and log right into it," said Robert Alrod, chairman of LEAH's board of directors. The videotaped interviews show how the Holocaust affected "humanity, civilization, family life, community life and

jurisprudence," Alrod said. "The psychology of the human being was deeply impacted."

The collection also provides evidence to counter claims that the Holocaust didn't occur, said Stephen Spiegel, LEAH executive director.

Archive users request the testimonials they want and the interviews are sent electronically to FAU's computers from the Archive Center at the University of Southern California.

Generally, testimonials are available within an hour or two but sometimes it can take up to 48 hours to receive them, William Miller, dean of the FAU libraries, said. The testimonies of Floridians are stored in FAU's computers and available immediately, Miller added.

Testimonials can be watched in the Center where there are two computers with large monitors or on computers around the library's reference area, he said.

To use the computers contact Ken Frankel in the library's Reference Department at 561-297-0079 or call the reference desk at 561-297-3785.