

Preliminary Report on Activities of the UCLA Chapter of ARSC Academic Year 2017–2018

By Yuri Shimoda and Shawn VanCour
Filed April 23, 2018; Revised June 10, 2018

On October 27, 2017, students at the University of California, Los Angeles officially launched a new UCLA chapter of ARSC. This is ARSC's first operational California chapter in over a decade, with the former Northern California and Southern California chapters long since defunct, and the group enjoys the added distinction of being the first entirely student-run chapter in the organization's history. Led by chair Yuri Shimoda (MLIS 2019), the UCLA chapter boasts 50 signatory members, consisting of graduate students from the departments of Information Studies and Ethnomusicology. The group has also gained recognition from the university as an official student organization, giving them access to guaranteed funding and campus meeting spaces. Information Studies professor and ARSC member Shawn VanCour currently serves as faculty advisor.

In its first eight months of operation, the chapter has held three quarterly meetings and seven official chapter events. These include (1) assisting ARSC member David Seubert (Special Collections curator at UC Santa Barbara) in packing and relocating a newly acquired record collection, which entailed a training session in proper handling and storage of legacy audio media; (2) a site visit to UCSB's Cylinder Audio Archive for a tour of their facilities and collections; (3) a site visit to the LA Philharmonic Archive, where archivist Selena Chau provided an orientation to that organization's legacy audio equipment and collections; (4) a visit to United Recording Studios, where head of archiving Dan Johnson provided chapter members with a tour of the recording studios and archiving suite for an overview of their multi-format digitization capabilities; (5) a campus lecture by Scopitone collector John Carlson (film professor at the City College of San Francisco), cosponsored by the UCLA student chapter of the Association for Moving Image Archivists; (6) a workshop in cleaning and care of vinyl LPs, led by ARSC members Yasmin Dessem and Allie Whalen from UCLA Library's Audiovisual Preservation Department; and (7) an Art and Sound Mixer, cosponsored by UCLA's Artifacts student group (based in the Information Studies Department and devoted to issues in arts librarianship and museum informatics), which served as a tool for outreach to other ARSC members in the greater LA area. Chapter members have also been actively assisting Information Studies faculty in developing a new audio transfer work station in the department's Media Lab, which will offer a space for students to work with a wide range of audio formats and develop skills in proper handling and reformatting of legacy sound media.

The group sent a three-member delegation to the ARSC conference in May, including first-year MLIS student Shimoda and second-year students Chloe Patton and Siri Luk. Ms. Shimoda (who was awarded an ARSC travel grant) presented a poster with Ms. Patton on music in the films of Wes Anderson. While in Baltimore, chapter members also made a trip to nearby Culpeper, Virginia for a tour of the National Audio-Visual Conservation Center. Shimoda and Luk will also attend the Audio Engineering Society's International Conference on Audio Archiving, Preservation, and Restoration at the NAVCC later this month, while Shimoda is also conducting a summer-long residency at the Packard Campus under the direction of Caitlin Hunter (Head, Recorded Sound Section) and Patrick Midtlyng (Head, Recorded Sound Processing Unit), through the Library of Congress Junior Fellows internship program.
