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Displaying the Past: Guidelines for Outreach Using Archival Collections

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In the Summer of 2017, our community college library had the opportunity to partner with a local historical society to produce an exhibit about the history of the college in the society's welcome center. With no dedicated archivist or outreach librarian, two research and instruction librarians with prior archives experience were tasked with leading and implementing this project with little precedent. The exhibit, *Northern Essex Community College: The Early Years in Haverhill*, was created with materials from a relatively new archival collection that is still in the early stages of development. Most of the collection is minimally processed without finding aids or consistent inventories. In order to create this exhibit, we had to inventory and identify potential archival sources for display, address preservation concerns, obtain display equipment, coordinate installation with the historical society, work with college public relations, and plan an opening reception. With future outreach exhibits anticipated, we will use what we learned during this process to make subsequent outreach exhibits easier to plan and execute.

