

Young Men's Christian Association, University Branch records, 1892-1968

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Young Men's Christian Association (Seattle, Wash.). University Branch
Title	Young Men's Christian Association, University Branch records
Dates	1892-1968 (inclusive) 1892 1968
Quantity	5.38 cubic feet (8 boxes, 1 oversize folder)
Collection Number	2126 (Accession No. 2126-003)
Summary	Records of the YMCA (Seattle, Wash.) University Branch, documenting its programs, activism, buildings, and members.
Repository	University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections Special Collections University of Washington Libraries Box 352900 Seattle, WA 98195-2900 Telephone: 206-543-1929 Fax: 206-543-1931 speccoll@uw.edu
Access Restrictions	Open to all users.
Additional Reference Guides	
Languages	English
Sponsor	Funding for encoding this finding aid was partially provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Historical Note

The University Branch of the YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) was founded September 8, 1888, when the University of Washington campus was located in downtown Seattle. It was the first student organization at the university, and it functioned primarily as a religious organization. The YMCA was reorganized several times in its early years, but there is little documentation from that period. By 1900 the University Branch had more steady contact with the national organization and began to integrate itself into the campus community.

In 1910 the YMCA moved into the Arctic Brotherhood building, a log structure on the present campus. In the teens the Y began to grow substantially, from 260 members in 1912 to 710 in 1916. Members were very active in local issues, including labor, immigrant education, grammar school athletics, and the Big Brothers organization. General Secretary Charles L. Maxfield was the first professional to hold the position of secretary in the University Branch of the YMCA. He was instrumental in the campaign to build Eagleson Hall.

The YMCA had been a strong presence on campus, but with a change in university policies during the 1920s concerning the separation of church and state, it became necessary for the YMCA to find a new home. A suitable site was found, and members undertook an aggressive fundraising drive. After many pleas for contributions to the building fund, Maxfield secured a \$10,000 grant from John D. Rockefeller. In March 1923, Eagleson Hall was dedicated, completed at a cost of \$100,000, including furnishings. It remained the home of the YMCA until it was sold to the university in 1963.

Throughout the 1930s the YMCA was considered a radical organization due to its involvement in issues concerning global peace and free speech. It was a vital part of the lives not only of many students but also of servicemen who received training on campus during World War II. During the war, the YMCA was active in opposing the incarceration of Japanese Americans. Criticisms of the YMCA's liberal actions were heard again in 1962, when the organization defended its decision to rent a room to students who had invited communist leader Gus Hall to speak. The university had rejected requests to let Hall speak on campus, and the YMCA came under the scrutiny of the national organization for its decision.

In 1940 the YWCA University Branch moved into Eagleson Hall. Attempts to connect the two groups in the 1920s had failed, as the YMCA perceived the YWCA as too feminist for a successful partnership. During the time that the YMCA and YWCA were housed together, however, they worked closely. Both organizations left Eagleson Hall in 1963.

Content Description

The records contain minutes, correspondence, handbooks, newsletters, reports, programs, subject series, ephemera, and financial records from 1892 to 1968. The bulk of the records are from the 1920s through the 1940s. Among the earlier items are student handbooks that were instrumental in publicizing the organization to University of Washington students. Records include extensive minutes that document board of trustees and other meetings. The minutes were bound together and have not been separated. The Subject Series contains information on specific topics and activities of interest to the organization, such as campus buildings, Gus Hall's speaking engagement, and Japanese student civil rights.

Use of the Collection

Alternative Forms Available

[View selections from this collection in digital format.](#)

Restrictions on Use

The creators' literary rights have not been transferred to the University of Washington Libraries. Contact the Special Collections division, University of Washington Libraries for details.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Gift of Dorothy Jenkins, May 16, 1973. Imprints and scrapbooks were relocated from the University Archives in May 1982.

Processing Note

Processed by Liliun Rajan in 2004.

This accession is a merger of previous accessions: 2126-1, 2126-2, and 3300-82-18.

103 black-and-white photographic prints, 1 color photographic print, 1 black-and-white postcard, and 24 negatives depicting past officers and members, conferences, banquets, social events, and buildings that housed the YMCA organization at the University of Washington were relocated to Photo Accession no. 2004-048 in the division on March 26, 2004.

Related Materials

An undated memoir concerning the YMCA and its relationship to the University of Washington by Herbert L. Seamans is included in Seamans's papers, Accession no. 1876-001, in the division.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Administrative Records

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/Folder		
1/1-2	Historical Features	1928-1968, undated
1/3	Organizational Features	undated
General Correspondence		
Box/Folder		
1/4	Council of North American Student Movements, Students' Friendship War Fund (Gale Seaman)	1917
1/5	Miscellaneous, A-Z	1915-1946
Minutes		
Box/Folder		

Container(s)	Description	Dates
1/6-2/4	Cabinet	1912-1952
2/5-12	Board of Trustees	1953-1963
Reports		
Box/Folder		
2/13	Annual Reports	1923-1936
Box:Oversize		
4	Certification	1909-1930
Box/Folder		
2/14	Missionary Team	1918
2/15-19	Miscellaneous	1916-1961
Box:Oversize		
Misc. Oversize Box 7	Statistical Charts	1952
Box/Folder		
2/20	Policies	1934-1958
Newsletters		
Box/Folder		
2/21-22	YMCA	1930-1964
2/23	YMCA Alumni	1935-1939
2/24	Other Organizations	1940-1964
Box/Folder		

Container(s)	Description	Dates
2/25-27	Financial Records	1914-1945
2/28	Speeches and Writings	undated
Programs		
Box/Folder		
2/29-32	International Banquet	1920-1966
2/33	Other	1900-1943
Box/Folder		
2/34	Photograph (Duplicate)	
2/35	Conferences and Conventions	1923
Subject Series		
<p>Major topics covered in the Subject Series are the building of Eagleson Hall, the rental of Y facilities for a speaking engagement of communist leader Gus Hall, and the building and dedication of the Thompson Memorial Library. Records pertaining to Eagleson Hall include donation appeals written to John D. Rockefeller and the responses of his secretary, Mr. W.S. Richardson. During the forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans from the West Coast in World War II, the YWCA actively supported Japanese students and tried to protect the civil rights of other Japanese members of the Seattle community. Of particular interest are letters written by YMCA member Tosh Fukushima from an internment camp.</p>		
Eagleson Hall		
General Correspondence		
Box/Folder		
3/1	Rockefeller, John D.	1920-1923
3/2	Suzzallo, Henry	1921-1923
3/3	Miscellaneous	1920-1930

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/Folder		
3/4	Minutes	ca. 1920-1930
3/5	Reports	ca. 1920-1930
	Lists	
Box/Folder		
3/6	Committee Members	undated
3/7	Subscriptions	1924-1925
Box/Folder		
3/8	Speeches and Writings	undated
3/9	Legal Documents	1921-1926
3/10	Booklets	undated
3/11	Ephemera	1892-1921
3/12	Clippings	1923
Box/Folder		
3/13-14	Fiftieth Anniversary	1938
	Gus Hall Rental	
Box/Folder		
3/15	Interorganizational Correspondence -- National Student Council of YMCAs	1962
3/16	General Correspondence	1962-1963
3/17	Statements and Policies	1962
3/18	Notes	undated

Container(s)	Description	Dates
3/19	Applications	1962
3/20	News Releases	1962
3/21	Clippings	1962
Box/Folder		
3/22-24	International Relations	1936-1940
	Japanese Student Relocation	
	Incoming Letters	
Box/Folder		
3/25	Fukushima, Tosh	1943
Box/Folder		
3/26	General Correspondence	1942-1943
3/27	Minutes	1942-1944
3/28	Reports	1942-1944
3/29	Newsletters	1943-1944
3/30	Conferences and Conventions	1937
3/31	Surveys	1942
3/32	Speeches and Writings	1942-1943, undated
3/33	Directory	1943
3/34	Ephemera	undated
3/35	Clippings	1942-1943
Box/Folder		

Container(s)	Description	Dates
3/36	Religion and the State University	1947-1960
3/37	Swygaard Fund	1935-1936
3/38-40	Thompson Memorial Library	1936
3/41	Wing Luke Memorial	1966

Lists

Box/Folder

3/42	Alumni	1927-1942, undated
3/43	Board of Trustees	1925-1965, undated
3/44	Cabinet Members	1923-1968, undated
3/45	Committee Members	1928-1936, undated
3/46	Mothers' Tea	1934

Box/Folder

3/47	Ephemera	1931-1952
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Handbooks

Box

5-6	Student Handbooks	1895-1933
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Box/Folder

3/48	<i>Washington Men</i>	1931-1933
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Box/Folder

Container(s)	Description	Dates
3/49	Loan Documents	1914
3/50	Clippings	1914-1965
Scrapbooks		
Box:Oversize		
4	Scrapbook	1903-1939
7	Scrapbook	1924-1932, 1952-1953
8	Scrapbook	1929-1938

Foundation for International Understanding Through Students, 1948

Box-folder3/51

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Christian college students--Washington (State)--Seattle--Archives
 Christian college students--Washington (State)--Seattle--Political activity
 Christian college students--Washington (State)--Seattle--Societies, etc
 College buildings--Washington (State)
 Freedom of speech--Washington (State)--Seattle
 Japanese Americans--Evacuation and relocation, 1942-1945
 Japanese Americans--Washington (State)--Seattle--Civil rights
 Male college students--Washington (State)--Seattle--Archives
 Male college students--Washington (State)--Seattle--Political activity
 Male college students--Washington (State)--Seattle--Societies, etc

Corporate Names :

Eagleson Hall (Seattle, Wash.)
 University of Washington--Societies, etc
 Young Men's Christian Association (Seattle, Wash.). University Branch--Archives

Geographical Names :

Seattle (Wash.)--Politics and government

Form or Genre Terms :

Scrapbooks

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Young Men's Christian Association, University Branch records, 1892-1968
<http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv43444>

Personal Papers/Corporate Records (University of Washington)

2005 (Last modified: 4/19/2018)



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