

# THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

## *Regents Communication*

**Adopted by the Regents  
July 17, 2014**

### ACTION REQUEST

**Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement**

**Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir**

**Leonard A. Coombs, A.M.L.S.**, Johanna Meijer Magoon Principal Archivist and archivist in the Bentley Historical Library, retired from active faculty status on June 30, 2014.

Mr. Coombs received his B.A. degree from Northern Michigan University in 1973 and his A.M.L.S. degree from the University of Michigan in 1978. He joined the University of Michigan faculty as an assistant archivist in 1981, and was promoted to associate archivist in 1985, and archivist in 2003. He was appointed the Johanna Meijer Magoon Principle Archivist and head of the Library's Michigan Historical Collections in 2013.

A leading authority on the history of the state of Michigan, Mr. Coombs played an instrumental role in the administration and development of the University's nationally recognized Michigan Historical Collections. He oversaw the implementation of a comprehensive acquisition strategy, the transition to multiple new catalog platforms, and the preparation of the collections for the Google digitization project. Mr. Coombs authored, co-authored, and edited numerous publications including *Intellectual Life on the Michigan Frontier: The Libraries of Gabriel Richard & John Monteith* (1985), an important contribution to the histories of both the state and the University. Mr. Coombs curated a number of notable exhibitions including *Douglass Houghton and Michigan's Economic Development*, *Native Peoples in Transition: Michigan Indians in the Nineteenth Century*, and *Bicentennial of the Michigan Territory, 1805-2005*. From 1987-97, he was actively involved in a project that sought to apply basic descriptive methodology, common to most modern archival institutions, to the holdings of the Vatican Archives. The results of this collaborative endeavor were published in *Vatican Archives, An Inventory and Guide to Historical Documents of the Holy See* (1998). Mr. Coombs was a frequent invited presenter in the School of Information and generously shared his expertise as a judge for the Michigan History Day State Finals sponsored by the Historical Society of Michigan.

The Regents now salute this distinguished faculty member by naming **Leonard A. Coombs archivist emeritus**.

**Requested by:**



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**Sally J. Churchill, J.D.**

**Vice President and Secretary of the University**

**July 2014**