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Scholars' Lab,
University of Virginia Library,
Charlottesville, Virginia

Dear Digital Humanities Developer Search Committee,

I am writing as an applicant for the Digital Humanities Developer position, posted June 27, 3017. I am currently finishing my doctorate in history at Vanderbilt University, and working part-time as a data developer at Aspire Health. Since 2012 I have been active in the digital humanities community at Vanderbilt, and in March 2017 I completed a nine-month full-stack developer bootcamp at the Nashville Software School (NSS). I believe I am an excellent candidate for this position because I am passionate about the full-stack of digital humanities development – from conception to execution to maintenance of digital humanities projects. Furthermore, I have experience evaluating and deploying technologies for humanities research, both for my projects and as a consultant for the Vanderbilt Center for Digital Humanities. Most importantly, I am passionate about working with a team, and writing clean and sustainable code. Thus this position represents an ideal opportunity for me to marry my two passions, digital humanities and software development, while also having the chance to contribute to the Scholars' Lab excellent team and diverse scholarly community.

My path towards software development started in 2010 when, in between undergraduate and graduate studies, I worked at a computer repair store as office manager and web designer, and started experimenting with computing. When I entered graduate school, digital humanities was relatively new to the Vanderbilt campus, and I was lucky to find a supportive community of staff and scholars who encouraged my interests in bridging history and technology. Since 2012, when I was selected as HASTAC scholar for the Vanderbilt Center for Teaching, I have explored everything from digital pedagogy and mapping to networks analysis and data visualization. I have served as a Graduate Fellow at the both the Vanderbilt Center for Digital Humanities 2016-2017 and the Vanderbilt Institute of Digital Learning 2014-2015. I have also attended both the Digital Humanities Summer Institute 2015 and Humanities Intensive Learning and Training 2014, studying databases and humanities programming respectively. At Vanderbilt, I have organized and led both technical workshops and reading groups on digital humanities. Since learning about digital humanities, the work of the Scholars' Lab has been one of my foremost sources of inspiration. In fact, my first server deployment was to run an instance of Neatline through Omeka, and the Praxis Program has

been a model for my efforts at building a more collaborative digital humanities community at Vanderbilt.

Brandon Walsh and Wayne Graham's Humanities Programming course at HILT was my first exposure to programming, and planted the seeds that led me to enroll in a full-stack developer bootcamp. At NSS, I specialized in Angular, Python, and Django, and was able to create two portfolio pieces. The first, Archivlo, is designed to help archival researchers find records about archival holdings, and encourage collaboration between scholars. I will be presenting this application at the Annual Digital Humanities Conference this year. My second project, Image Lucida, is an image analysis app built with Django and Angular that uses various OCR APIs and computer vision libraries to allow researchers to extract both texts and images from their digital archival materials. Currently, I am using Image Lucida to process my research data, and I plan to use a combination of statistical and visualization libraries in R and Python to trace how the meanings of anti-colonialism shifted over this period. I believe my experiences in digital humanities would help me advise others on how to develop their digital humanities projects, and I am passionate about helping researchers meaningfully integrate technology into their work.

Since March 2017, I have been working part-time as a data developer at Aspire Health, a healthcare startup in Nashville. My role primarily involves creating internal data analysis tools and analyzing our existing data resources to provide business insights. The startup's technology stack was completely new to me, but I have enjoyed the challenge of learning React and Redux, as well as writing front-end tests using Mocha and Chai. In this position, I am also responsible for building out an API in Elixir, and using Postgres and T-SQL to analyze enrollment trends in the data. These experiences have helped me further my knowledge of current software development practices, and I would be excited to use these technologies, as well as to learn new ones at the Scholars' Lab.

Ultimately, the Scholars' Lab represents the scholarly community that I have been hoping to find since I entered graduate school. Having the opportunity to learn from a team of passionate researchers while writing code to support digital humanities projects is my dream. If selected for this position, I believe that I could help continue the mission of the Scholars' Lab to build an inclusive and collaborative digital humanities community, and contribute to a supportive and productive digital humanities development team.

If you wish to see any supplemental materials, please do not hesitate to contact me at zgleblanc@gmail.com or visit my website www.zoeleblanc.com.

Thank you for your consideration and I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,



Zoe LeBlanc