This research project represents a new venture for me; it has derived from questions and themes relating to my College Colloquium, “Journeys across the Pacific: from Asia to America.” In this project, I am interested in exploring the history and representation of Asian Pacific American spaces (such as Chinatowns and Koreatowns) in the Pacific Northwest, focusing specifically on the ways in which the history of a given place is represented as a public history and public memory of the Asian Pacific American community. A related topic I wish to explore is the malleability of identity in relation to the specificity of individual experience. Accordingly, I would like to investigate what may be termed “resistance” to these public histories within private narrative (while acknowledging that I may discover conformity instead), as well as the intersections between public histories of a place and private narratives situated within that space. At present, this project is not eligible for internal or external funding due to its nascent form; future stages may be eligible for Center for Asian Studies research funding.

In this initial stage, my primary intent is to accomplish a thorough survey of the historical resources available for this project, to review the relevant secondary literature for the topic, as well as to identify the most profitable directions for the project in terms of framing follow-up research questions, selecting appropriate methods of research, and designing the final product. At present, I intend to focus on specific places in Oregon and Washington: the Asian American community centers in Portland and Seattle, namely Portland’s Chinatown and Seattle’s International District; Hood River; and the Kam Wah Chung State Heritage Site in John Day. In addition to utilizing the collections of the Oregon Historical Society and related state archives, I plan to visit the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center and the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association in Portland, and the Wing Luke Museum and the Chung Wa Benevolent Association in Seattle. In addition, I plan to consult with Linda Tamura of Willamette University School of Education and Jeffrey Barlow of Pacific University, both of whom have conducted research on Asian American communities in Hood River and John Day, respectively.

This summer, I will be working with Kimberly Hursh, who has proposed to research the relationship between place and identity focusing on the Chicano community in the Pacific Northwest. Kimberly’s project complements my own in its thematic focus: she is particularly interested in exploring what constitutes group identity and how public community spaces may contribute to that formation. She and I will be conducting much of our field research in tandem as well as working together on our respective historiographical surveys, testing our preliminary findings against the comparative example. I have taught Kimberly in class and am very impressed by her strong intellect and diligent work habits. I anticipate that the revelations that will result from our collaborative research and reading efforts will be very instructive for us both.
Budget McCaffrey/Hursh

Memberships to the Oregon Historical Society (2) $120
3-Day research trip to Seattle, WA
   Mileage $215
   Per diem X 2 ($250 pp/day) $1500
2-Day research trip to John Day, Oregon
   Mileage $265
   Per diem X 2 ($250 pp/day) $1000

TOTAL: $3100