

## DVD PROUDLY DISPLAYS EVINS' ACHIEVEMENTS

[Megan Trotter](#)

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Herald-Citizen Photo/Megan Trotter Carolyn Powell, intern at the Tennessee Tech Library, and Mancel Johnson, the library archivist, look through the files of information on the late Congressman Joe L. Evins.

**COOKEVILLE** -- When Carolyn Powell came to Tennessee Technological University this summer to serve her internship at the university archives, she had never heard of the late Congressman Joe L. Evins.

However, as she sifted through the university library's extensive collection of 893 boxes filled with volumes, scrapbooks, audio and video tapes, photographs and memorabilia concerning Evins, she uncovered a wealth of information about the man who had a hand in bringing about many of the familiar sights in Putnam County today, including Interstate 40, Highway 111 and engineering and ecological facilities at Tennessee Tech.

"What my task was was to go through his congressional papers, which is an extensive collection here at the university archives," Powell said. "I had to 'meet' the man, I had to get to know him, and then I had to come up with a story line."

Under the mentoring of Tech university archivist Mancel Johnson and help from many others in the community, Powell pulled together an overview of Joe L. Evins' life in the form of a 45-minute DVD narrated by Philip Gibbons of the County Giant. Titled, "Pleased to Be of Service," the movie covers the late congressman's life from birth until death, highlighting the various projects that Evins was involved in.

The movie calls Evins, "a different sort of hero," one who was "a champion of small-business and the family, a public servant and architect to progress. In Congress, his service spanned 30 years and the administrations of six presidents. He served the American people, dedicated his life to the constituents of the fourth congressional district of middle Tennessee."

Powell's goal was to make the DVD a tool that local high schools could use to teach students about Evins. She also wanted the project to serve as an example about what can be done with a library's archives.

"This was just from one collection," she said. "When you think about the archives that are around the country, in every university and in every business, it amazes me how much material is out there."

During the 10 weeks it took to put everything together, Powell had to become proficient in a variety of subjects such as interviewing, videography, voice-over, copyright, licensing, editing, timing, music and rendering.

Even with help, the task of sorting through all the information was daunting. For example, Powell looked through the university's 3,500 photographs dealing with Evins, scanned 450 of them into a computer herself and chose 250 to use in the final copy of the movie.

"I have acquired a respect for the people who do these types of productions, because it is no small feat,"

said Powell.

At the first public showing of the movie last week at Tennessee Tech, "Pleased to Be of Service" received rave reviews from both historians and family members of Evins alike. Johnson was pleased and impressed to see the room full of people gathered to watch the movie.

"For a long time I thought that one of the great crimes was that the Evins collection was not used more than it was," he said before he dimmed the lights for the first viewing. "I think it is one of those collections that is going to gain value as years go by. I've, for a long time, wanted to do something to raise the profile of the collection, to get people interested in the congressman and his contributions again. ... I happen to think (Powell's project) is probably the best thing I've ever seen done on the congressman's life."

Those interested in receiving a copy of the DVD can call Johnson at 372-3537 or e-mail him at [mjohnson@tntech.edu](mailto:mjohnson@tntech.edu).

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