

SAA Mentoring Program Subcommittee

Report to the Membership Committee by Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Teresa Mora and Alison Stankrauff

July 25, 2013

Administering the Mentorship Program

As of July 22, 2013, there were a total of 187 Protégés and 125 Mentor volunteers active in the program. Of these, 35 Protégés are waiting to be matched, most of whom have specific areas of focus they are interested in. Of the 125 Mentors, 119 are currently matched and 21 Mentors currently mentor more than one Protégé. At this time, we aim to match Protégés with Mentors within two weeks of application. Efforts in this behalf on the part of the Subcommittee in the past year have included:

- Reviewing the lists of Protégés and Mentors to identify individuals in current active matches or awaiting match.
- Contacting recently "expired" Mentors to get feedback on the program and see if they are interested in being matched with another Protégé.
- Articulating the benefits and expectations of both Mentors and Protégés on the SAA website.
- Promoting the Mentor program and making calls to the membership for Mentors.
- Submitting a call to the Fellows listserv for Mentors.
- Collecting biographical and professional information from Mentors and Protégés that have allowed the subcommittee to make matches.
- Updating the database to keep track of matches and manage the mentoring program.
- Updating of the Mentoring page on the SAA website (<http://www2.archivists.org/membership/mentoring>).

Defining the Program and Other Substantive Tasks

The subcommittee met via conference call on March 25 to check in about various projects the Committee had undertaken for the 2012/2013 year.

A survey was developed by Co-Chair, Alison Stankrauff and distributed to the Archives & Archivists listserv (see attached for report of results). Ideally the survey will be distributed to recently "expired" Mentors and Protégés as a matter of course.

There has been significant internal discussion amongst the Co-Chairs about the role of the Mentoring Subcommittee in the newly launched Mosaic program which is meant to include a mentoring component. We have made the leadership of the Membership Committee, our SAA Council Liaison, Terry Baxter, and SAA staff aware of our interest in being involved in the development of the mentoring component of the program.

Ongoing Issues/ Goals for the Upcoming Year

The Mentoring Program Subcommittee will continue the work of matching Mentors with Protégés and soliciting more Mentors. In addition, the Subcommittee will continue to address recommended changes submitted by the Task force on Mentoring in 2009:

Further expand the SAA mentoring website to include additional online resources and links.

Develop training for Mentors, including a possible joint workshop for Mentors and Protégés.

Add a checkbox to the SAA Membership Form to indicate interest in serving as a Mentor - for both new SAA members and for renewing SAA members."

To have a third party – meaning a Mentoring Program member – check in on the partnership periodically to see if the connection was going well – or made at all in the case of a few.

For the Mentoring Program to draw up guidelines (who, when, how often, etc.) so that both the Protégé and the Mentor knew what to expect from the program – and from each other.

The Subcommittee also hopes to engage in dialog with staff and appropriate committees about the development of a Mentor/ Protégé component for all award recipients but most notably the enhanced Mosaic Program.

Society of American Archivists Mentoring Program Survey Report – 2013

The Mentoring Program of the Society of American Archivists sent out a survey to the SAA membership via the SAA listserv in April of 2013. There were twenty-seven respondents to the survey.

The questions included in the survey include content that ask nine questions in all:

1. Did you serve as a Mentor or as a Protégé?
2. How long have you - or did you participate in the Mentoring Program?
Which years have you participated in the Program? (approximately is alright)
3. What drew you to participate in the SAA Mentoring Program?
4. Was your application responded to in a timely fashion?
- Was your acknowledgement of the application answered in a timely fashion?
- Was a match was made in a timely fashion?
5. Was your experience serving as a Mentor or as a Protégé a fulfilling one? Were your expectations fulfilled? Why or why not?
6. Did you encounter any obstacle(s) during your term serving as a Mentor or Protégé? If yes, what were they?
7. Do you think that you were matched with the right person? Why or why not? We want to hear your experiences!
8. Can you think of ways to improve the Mentoring Program experience for those who serve as Mentors or Protégés? Please feel free to give detail!
9. Optionally, feel free to add your contact information here if you would like us to include your comments in future SAA articles and promotion of the Mentoring Program.

Out of the respondents, 70.37% - or 19 – were Mentors. 40.74% - or 11 – were Protégés.

The majority of the respondents have participated in the program for more than one year. The average is two to three years. There were a couple of respondents very new to the program (one was only a week old), one respondent has served as a Mentor for seven years.

Reasons that drew participants to the Mentoring Program ranged from the idealistic to the pragmatic. The idealistic answers tended to come from those who served as Mentors, and included responses such as wanting to give back to the profession, receiving similar good help as they grew in the profession, wanting to connect with new professionals. The pragmatic responses came from Protégés – and included wanting help with reviewing and amending vitas, getting guidance on education, being new to

the profession, being the only archivist at their institution and needing a sounding board.

A whopping **96%** of respondents felt that their application was responded to in a timely fashion and a match subsequently filled.

As to whether or not the respondents felt that their experience serving as a Mentor or a Protégé was a fulfilling one, overwhelmingly the answer was yes from this set of respondents. Some of the responses were glowing, in fact. There were a few people who did not have such positive experiences – all because of lack of communication or response – from either their Protégé(s) or Mentors.

The obstacles that respondents found serving as a Mentor or a Protégé boiled down to lack of communication or distance from their match or lack of time to truly make a connection.

As to whether or not the respondents felt they were matched with the right person, again, the overwhelming answer was 'yes'. Detailed responses as to any responses of 'no' include that they felt they could have been paired with someone who had more similar skillsets – or the skillsets that they were seeking more knowledge on. There were a couple of lone arrangers at small colleges who were matched with academic archivists at large universities whose experiences, they felt, were dissimilar to theirs.

People gave some feedback as to ways that would be improvements to the Mentoring Program that are quite promising. The answer that several people offered were to have a third party – meaning a Mentoring Program member – check in on the partnership periodically to see if the connection was going well – or made at all in the case of a few. Another suggestion that came from more than one respondent was for the Mentoring Program to draw up guidelines (who, when, how often, etc.) so that both the Protégé and the Mentor knew what to expect from the program – and from each other.

There were six respondents offering further comment and contact information to the Mentoring Program for both promotion and connecting purposes.

Submitted by Alison Stankrauff, SAA Mentoring Program Co-Chair – July 24, 2013.