

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
May 7-9, 2018
Chicago, Illinois**

**Report: Archivists to the Rescue Pilot Project
(Prepared by Deb Schiff, Lone Arrangers Section Vice Chair/Chair-Elect)**

BACKGROUND

The SAA Archivists to the Rescue! Project strives to bring local, very-low- and no-cost, basic archival training workshops to non-professional archivists and cultural heritage professionals and volunteers who cannot afford typical professional development courses and/or the transportation costs required to travel outside of their areas for similar workshops. By bringing these hands-on, in-person workshops to individuals with little or no archival background or skills, we will help to preserve and make accessible the collective knowledge and archival record of the participating communities, increase the awareness of the profession and SAA, and promote a more inclusive profession. An additional benefit to those seeking to recertify as Certified Archivists comes in the form of an opportunity to lead half- and full-day workshops in the field.

With the guidance of an Advisory Board outfitted with SAA Fellows and one particularly noteworthy librarian, volunteer members of the SAA Lone Arrangers Section; Reference, Access and Outreach Section; and Issues and Advocacy Section are in the process of developing a pilot program comprising a series of workshops covering the essentials of preservation, archival processing, arrangement, description, digital archives (handling born-digital materials and digitizing materials), and identifying and caring for photographs. We are partnering with local cultural heritage organizations, public libraries, and the Center for the Conservation of Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA) to roll out the pilot to religious archives and small historical organizations in New Jersey.

The desired outcome of the pilot portion of this project is a group of standardized and vetted workshops, handouts, and other supporting materials that can be easily downloadable by Lone Arrangers and other SAA members who wish to deliver the same kinds of workshops to their local communities. The intent is to create workshop materials that can be customized to fit local organizational needs. They will be available for download from the SAA Lone Arrangers microsite, and we will work to have these resources linked on other areas of the SAA website.

DISCUSSION

Since Brenda Gunn, our Council liaison, and Nancy Beaumont, SAA Executive Director, presented our pilot project to the Council earlier this year, the project team has been moving forward at a reasonable pace. We – SAA members and Section leaders Deb Schiff, Alison Stankrauff, Michelle Ganz, Ashley Levine, and Russ Gasero, as well as Dyani Feige of CCAHA – have been reviewing the materials submitted from archivists across the country for consideration in the project.

Schiff used Google Sheets to organize all of the project contributors in one place, with their contributions and contact information. Here is a link to view all who have contributed in some way to the project so far, and their contributions:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1y0isx_LjkCmwSy474c2tTe9HXOUKpKOrt0p1RzVKpKQ/edit?usp=sharing.

We have obtained permissions to alter, use, and distribute all of the materials submitted. We expect to have reached a consensus on which materials to use for the workshops, any changes to be made, and the formats for each workshop by the end of April.

For the workshop materials (handouts, bibliographies, and presentations) reviews, Schiff used a Google Form so that the reviewers would have a standard method of reviewing each set of materials. Here is a link to the form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1cYIT4lq9uNgLGO0Bn5Ix-9QII8o3AO2fmx2vbOO_2uM/edit.

The responses from the form go into a page within a Google Sheet that lists all of the workshop materials, so that everything is in the same place.

Levine has developed interview questions for video interviews and participant surveys (part of the measures of success for the project). Ganz has developed forms for the instructors and participants. All will be reviewed by the entire project team after the workshops have been fully vetted.

By the end of April, sites across the state of New Jersey and workshop presenters will be selected. By the end of May, it is hoped that the workshops will be scheduled with the sites and we can begin promoting the workshops and selecting the cohort of participants. It is hoped that each participant will be able to attend all of the workshops at their site.

Annie Tummino of the SAA Lone Arrangers Steering Committee has organized a Lone Arrangers/Archivists to the Rescue Project Meet Up at the April MARAC meeting. There, Schiff will give a short report on the project and sell the Archivist pin designed by the Los Angeles Archivists Collective as a fundraiser for the pilot. It is expected that a portion of the proceeds will go toward producing more pins to sell at the 2018 Joint Annual Meeting. (Beaumont said we would have a table at registration for this purpose.) The remainder would go to expenses associated with the workshops.

Beaumont said that she would talk with the vendors about providing supplies to the workshops when we are further along and have more details on the number of attendees and the exact locations.