

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
July 24, 2017
Oregon Convention Center
Portland, Oregon**

**Preliminary Discussion: Diversity Recruitment Video
(Prepared by Nancy Beaumont)**

BACKGROUND

The Diversity Committee has had preliminary discussions of an idea presented by Committee member Linda Long to develop a recruitment video that might assist in SAA's efforts to diversify the profession. The following notes from a May 11 conference call attended by Amy Cooper Cary (Council liaison to the Diversity Committee), Cheryl Beredo and Linda Long (Diversity Committee members), and Nancy Beaumont and Teresa Brinati (SAA staff) are provided to stimulate Council members' initial reaction to the idea. Diversity Committee Chair Holly Smith was not able to participate in the conference call, but is aware of this initiative.

CONFERENCE CALL NOTES

Discussion of the idea of a video and its purpose:

- Linda tried to get a recruitment video produced at the University of Oregon as part of a diversity committee there, but it never got off the ground.
- The idea is to create a video to encourage high school students to consider a career in archives.
- And/or the video could encourage college students to consider a career in archives.

How does this fit in with SAA's goals?

- Diversifying the profession has been in SAA's strategic plan for a long time, but it's proven to be one of those very challenging goals.
- Challenges to recruitment efforts in the past include: messaging (how to intrigue students?), making contact (how do we reach students, counselors? Can we access/buy email lists?), identifying best approach (how to penetrate the market? In the past, we have coached SAA members with talking points, encourage them to attend career days).
- To be able to point to material that tell a story would be great; it could be a dynamic way of reaching minority students.

How does this fit in with other diversity recruitment efforts?

- SAA did not collaborate with ALA on Discovering Librarianship project or on AERI's Emerging Archival Scholars grant.
- There has been some support at other levels: Nancy wrote a letter of support for the IMLS/AERI grant, SAA members and officers have participated in Discovering Librarianship and Emerging Archival Scholars.
- AERI diversifies the archival faculty, ALA diversifies library profession, Spectrum diversifies library school graduate programs, Mosaic diversifies archives graduate programs.
- Maybe our role is to recruit high school students? College students? Need to consider this question further.

What is the role of the SAA Council in this kind of effort?

- Amy can help put together a proposal for Council approval, especially if there's a need for SAA funds.
- Council would have something to contribute to the content, structure, format of recruitment video.
- Council would want to know how this fits into Diversity Committee priorities and how it would be managed across committee member turnover.
- Timing is opportune since Council will review strategic plan in November 2017.
- Given this, plan for a check-in with Council at July 2017 meeting. It doesn't need to be a full proposal with recommendation, just enough to stimulate discussion, feedback, and progress toward a full proposal.
- Amy, Nancy, and Teresa can help prepare us for that.

Issues and questions to consider:

- What is the most effective way to reach high school students? College students? College counselors? Career counselors?
- Are these the most appropriate audiences? Should we be thinking more broadly?
- How could a recruitment video be enhanced (for other audiences)? With additional videos? Think about it as developing a medium for SAA to communicate with potential members.
- Is a recruitment video the most effective mode of communication? If yes, in what cases? (One to one? One to many?)
- How does a recruitment video fit in with other efforts to diversify library school, archival practitioners, archival faculty and scholars?
- We don't want to duplicate other diversity efforts. What is SAA's appropriate niche?
- Where and how can SAA have the most impact?
- What should be our recruiting focus? Getting minority students into the archives profession?

About external funding:

- Diversity Committee may identify logical potential sources (via websites, informal conversations) and communicate this with SAA and the Council. Diversity Committee cannot approach funding agencies, and if individual members do so, conversations must not commit SAA to anything.
- Mellon, IMLS, Gates are all potential sources that are friendly to this kind of work.
- SAA's requests for funding need to be strategic and coordinated.

Things to do:

- An environmental scan of recruitment efforts for library and archives professions (ALA/Discovering Librarianship, AERI/Emerging Archival Scholars, etc.).
- Identify elements of those efforts that could serve our purpose (e.g., ALA's work to develop a sustainable leads and contact system).
- Talk with campus career counselors, MLIS admissions officers, undergraduate admissions officers about how recruiting and counseling works. What they are looking for in resources for their students?
- Talk with SAA members and officers who have participated in ALA/Discovering Librarianship, AERI/Emerging Archival Scholars, and other recruitment efforts. Where have they made inroads? What has been less than successful?
- Ask Deborra Richardson about something she developed while at the Smithsonian, "Treasures at the Museum," targeted for grade school children with focus on archives. Get anecdotal information about its impact.
- Flesh out the proposal at this point, including: how long the project would take and other key elements.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

Do Council members have any initial thoughts that should be relayed to the group that is exploring this opportunity?