

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
August 22, 2011
Chicago, Illinois**

**Diversity Committee: SAA Diversity Award
(Prepared by: Terry Baxter, Chair)**

BACKGROUND

SAA's Strategic Priority #2: Diversity, Desired Outcome #4, states the following: "SAA will adopt a Statement on Diversity, develop new programs, and enhance existing programs that promote diversity as a value while fostering an organizational environment of inclusiveness." (<http://www2.archivists.org/governance/strategic-priorities>) Measurable Activity #5 is to "establish and give an annual Diversity Award to both an individual and a repository."

At its May 2011 meeting, the SAA Council discussed ways in which to advance the strategic priority activity of developing an SAA Diversity Award and charged the Diversity Committee to, "take the lead on preparing draft language to launch SAA's recognition of outstanding works in this area," with a report to the Council at its August 2011 meeting.

The Diversity Committee reviewed other organizations' awards, SAA's Statement on Diversity, and current SAA awards and made suggestions that were incorporated into a draft by Committee Chair Terry Baxter. That draft served as the basis for a conference call, attended by Baxter; committee members Erika Castaño, Bergis Jules, and Debbie Richards; Council liaison Deborra Richardson; and SAA Executive Director Nancy Beaumont. A revised draft then was circulated to the full Diversity Committee for comment. The language provided in Recommendation 1 is the result of these discussions.

DISCUSSION

The idea of creating a Diversity Award has been included in SAA's strategic priorities for several years. The activity was sidelined pending drafting and adoption of an SAA Statement on Diversity that, presumably, would inform development of criteria for the award. The Statement on Diversity (<http://www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-statement-on-diversity>) was adopted by the Council on August 9, 2010.

The Committee's deliberations included the following:

- The award should be tied to SAA’s Statement on Diversity as a basis for nomination, but we purposefully left the broad language in the award description to encourage a wide range of nominations that support the expansion of diversity within the archives profession, SAA, and the archival record.
- Discussion of award eligibility requirements centered on whether recipients needed to be members of SAA. Beaumont noted that very few SAA awards restrict nominations in this way. The Committee chose to leave eligibility open to nonmembers but to encourage SAA member participation by allowing the Awards Committee to preference SAA member nominations.
- The Committee also discussed self-nominations. We believe that the nomination process is stronger when nominations must come from a second party, and we made this explicit in the award description.
- Rather than offer two awards (one to an individual and one to an institution, per the activity outlined in the Strategic Plan), the Committee thought that initially offering a single award would focus attention on the award recipient. If needed, the award could be expanded in the future to include specified categories.

Jules proposed that vendor funding be sought to support the award, allowing a cash award and the inclusion of vendors in the promotion of diversity within SAA. In addition to contra arguments, Beaumont noted that SAA will be reviewing vendor relationships in a broader way and suggested rolling this idea into the broader discussion.

RECOMMENDATION 1

THAT an SAA Diversity Award, as described below, be created and awarded for the first time in 2012:

SAA Diversity Award

Purpose and Criteria for Selection:

As one of the many activities and awards intended to address SAA’s Strategic Priority on Diversity, the purpose of the Diversity Award is to honor an individual, group, or institution for outstanding contribution in advancing diversity within the archives profession, SAA, or the archival record. Nominees will have demonstrated significant achievement in the form of activism, education, outreach, publication, service, or other initiatives in the archives field. The award is given based on the long-term impact on improving and promoting diversity as defined in the [SAA Statement on Diversity](#) [link].

Eligibility:

The Diversity Award is open to individuals, groups, and organizations. To encourage SAA member participation, preference may be given to SAA individual and/or institutional members. All application materials must be received by the posted deadline.

Selection:

Nominations will be accepted from any individual, group, or institution. Self-nominations will not be accepted.

Prize:

A certificate and complimentary Annual Meeting registration for the awardee (one individual or one representative of the group or institution) for the meeting at which the award is given.

Sponsor and Funding:

Society of American Archivists.

First Awarded:

2012

Selection Committee:

The Diversity Award Selection Subcommittee of the SAA Awards Committee consists of four members of the Society of American Archivists, one of whom shall be the current chair of the Diversity Committee whose term shall be concurrent with her/his office. The remaining members shall be appointed as necessary by the SAA Vice President to serve staggered three-year terms. In addition, the (co-)chair(s) of the SAA Awards Committee serves *ex officio* on the Subcommittee.

Application Requirements:

In addition to a completed nomination form, each nomination must include two letters of support from SAA members.

Application Deadline:

All nominations shall be submitted to SAA by February 28 of each year. Applicants will be notified of the committee's decisions on or before April 15. Download the nomination form as a [PDF](#) or [RTF](#). Send 6 copies of completed form and supplementary documentation to:

Diversity Award Subcommittee
Society of American Archivists
17 North State Street, Suite 1425
Chicago, IL 60602-4061

Questions should be directed to the [Chair](#) of the Diversity Award Subcommittee.

Support Statement: The creation of a Diversity Award, which addresses the specific activity called for in SAA's Strategic Priority on Diversity, is one means to promote diversity in SAA, the archives profession, and the archival record.

Fiscal Impact: Approximately \$400 annually to cover one complimentary conference registration and costs associated with creating and awarding a certificate.

RECOMMENDATION 2

THAT the description of the Awards Committee, Section II. Committee Selection, Size, and Length of Terms, be modified as follows (underline = addition):

II. Committee Selection, Size, and Length of Terms

The Awards Committee is composed of two committee co-chairs and the chairs of each of the awards subcommittees.

Annually the vice president/president-elect appoints one Awards Committee co-chair, who serves for one year as junior co-chair and one year as senior co-chair.

The selection, size, and length of term of each subcommittee is determined by the Council upon adoption of a new award and may be modified by the Council. Generally subcommittees comprise three members, each of whom serves for three years and as subcommittee chair in her/his third year. To ensure that appropriate expertise is represented on certain awards subcommittees, however, the Council has determined the following exceptions:

- Coker Award: The Description Section chair serves for one year as a fourth member.
- Jameson Award: The Reference, Access, and Outreach Section chair serves for one year as a fourth member.
- Lane Award: The vice president of the Society of Southwest Archivists (co-sponsor of the award) serves for one year as a fourth member.
- Pease Award: The subcommittee consists of three members: the *American Archivist* editor (chair), the Committee on Education vice chair, and one new appointee each year.
- Pinkett Award: The subcommittee consists of three members: the Archives and Archivists of Color Roundtable (AACRT) senior co-chair, one member of the AACRT (typically the junior co-chair) selected by the Roundtable senior co-chair, and one new appointee each year.
- Posner Award: All three members of the subcommittee must be SAA Fellows. They serve a standard three-year appointment with succession to the chair in the third year.
- Preservation Award: The Preservation Section chair serves for one year as a fourth member.
- Diversity Award: The Diversity Committee chair serves for one year as a fourth member.

Support Statement: Inclusion of this information in the Governance Manual ensures appropriate continuity in the appointments process.

Fiscal Impact: None.