

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
August 17–18, 2015
Renaissance Cleveland Hotel
Cleveland, Ohio**

**Executive Director’s Report
(Prepared by Nancy Beaumont)**

Reports on Membership, Education, Publications, the Annual Meeting, Technology, and the status of the Council-adopted recommendations of the Communications Task Force appear elsewhere in the staff reports for this Council meeting (0815-1-V-E). This report summarizes other Headquarters activities since May 2015.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

My focus since May 2015 has been on the Annual Meeting (see 0815-1-V-E-5) and on Goal 1: Advocating for Archives and Archivists, with an emphasis on public awareness activities. To that end:

- Teresa and I worked with outside public relations counsel to develop a video (featuring Kathleen Roe, Dennis Meissner, and SAA members Steven Booth and Samantha Norling), premiering at *ARCHIVES 2015*, that is intended to motivate members/archivists to be willing to speak up about the value of archives and archivists using compelling language. Creation of the video is a variation on the activities specified in the Committee on Public Awareness’s (Council-approved) work plan for 2014-2015.¹ Committee members reviewed the rough cut and provided both outstanding comments and several of the photos featured in the video.
- I worked with StoryCorps staff to arrange for a “booth” at *ARCHIVES 2015* at which 18 pairs of archivists will discuss – whatever they’d like! But we hope that their conversations will include questions like “What was the moment when you first decided to become an archivist?” and “What do you love most about being an archivist?” StoryCorps will audio record the conversations and archive them (with permission) at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. SAA will use snippets of the audiotapes – along with still photos of the pairs – on our website to help raise public awareness about archives and archivists.
- With Kathleen, I worked with the two Plenary 1 speakers (Tom Owen of PGAV and Daniel Horowitz Garcia of StoryCorps/Atlanta) to refine their remarks about “storytelling” to address the needs identified by COPA for member communication. Why does storytelling work so effectively to connect people, and how can archivists use storytelling techniques to explain the importance of what they do?
- Other initiatives on site in Cleveland to support the launch of “Archives Change Lives”:

¹<http://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/1114-VII-C-COPA-WorkPlan.pdf>

- The conference lanyards proclaim “Archives Change Lives.”
- Each attendee will receive a sticker at Registration that encourages him/her to fill in the blank -- “Archives ___ Lives” – and then either wear the sticker or post it on a board in the Registration area.
- We’ll be encouraging all attendees to download the new StoryCorps app that allows us all to “record and share the stories that are all around you.” We hope they/you will sit down with an archivist friend, colleague, or mentor and ask why s/he loves being an archivist. (For great questions, see <http://storycorps.org/great-questions/>.)

GOVERNANCE

- I drafted the minutes of the 0515 Council meeting and assisted the Council in online discussions and votes on approval of EAD3 and three Council exemplary service awards.
- I assisted President-Elect Dennis Meissner in communicating with some 82 new appointees.
- Staff prepared materials for the 0815-1 and 0815-2 Council meetings.

HEADQUARTERS OPERATIONS / HUMAN RESOURCES

- Peter Carlson invested significant time in preparing for our annual audit and meeting with the auditors in late July. Preliminary audit results will be available onsite at the Council meeting.
- While on maternity leave Program Coordinator René Craig resigned, effectively immediately. Recruitment to fill her position, with a focus on governance, will begin immediately after the Annual Meeting.
- Education Coordinator Ania Jaroszek resigned in July to pursue a job closer to home in the Chicago suburbs. Recruitment to fill her position has begun.
- Long-time staff member Jeanette Spears (Service Center) has announced her retirement, effective October 30. I will keep you apprised of our decisions about Jeanette’s position.
- I am very pleased to have signed a three-year contract to serve as SAA’s executive director through April 2018. Thank you!

SAA FOUNDATION

- Staff prepared materials for the Foundation Board’s August 19 meeting.
- The Foundation Development Committee has developed a work plan that will be discussed at the Foundation working dinner on Wednesday, August 19.

As always, I’m happy to respond to any questions or comments.