

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
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2017-2018 Nominating Committee Report

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The Society of American Archivists' 2017-2018 Nominating Committee has completed its work, following the Council's approved procedures. From August to December 2017, the Committee assembled a list of nominated candidates, discussed the candidates' qualifications, ranked the potential candidates, and contacted members to verify their willingness to serve. The following members agreed to stand for the respective offices and were presented as the 2018 slate of candidates:

Vice President/President Elect: Pam Hackbart-Dean, Michelle Light

Treasurer: Amy Fitch, Tim Pyatt

Council (3-year term): George Apodaca, Melissa Gonzales, Petrina Jackson, Jamie Martin, Ricardo Punzalan, Ashley Todd-Diaz

Nominating Committee: Grace Danico, Dinah Handel, Jasmine Jones, Dominique Luster, Daniel Noonan, Alison Stankrauff

The Committee developed the following questions, which were posed to the candidates and were included with candidate answers on the election website:

Vice President/President-Elect: At its November 2017 meeting, the SAA Council reviewed SAA's strategic plan, looking ahead to 2018-2020. Please discuss what you see as the strengths of the current strategic plan, two or three ways you might modify it, and the rationale for your suggestions.

Treasurer: One of SAA's Core Values is its commitment to "social responsibility and the public good." How can the position of treasurer incorporate that core value while ensuring the following outcomes:

- Continuation of SAA's good financial standing;
- Meeting members' needs;
- Encourage investing in sustainable ways; and
- Financial transparency.

Council: Council members' responsibilities include providing collaborative leadership and direction for the Society and its component groups to ensure achievement of SAA's goals. Please describe how your leadership experience will help you balance engaging the general SAA membership while being responsive to strategic goals, including but not limited to the objectives of diversity, inclusion, and transparency.

Nominating Committee: An essential component of the Nominating Committee's work is the identification of rising and seasoned leaders within SAA and the archival profession who embody the varied facets of professional diversity. Describe how you interpret this core responsibility and how you will identify candidates who represent a variety of backgrounds and perspectives, and who demonstrate committee to the strategic goals. .

SAA staff administered the election online using the VoteNet online balloting service. There was a participation rate of nearly 18% in the 2017-2018 election, which was down 1 percentage point from last year.

Election results were announced via the SAA website and social media, *In The Loop*, and *Archival Outlook*. The results are as follows:

Vice President/President-Elect: Michelle Light

Treasurer (2018-2021): Amy Fitch

Council (2018-2021): Melissa Gonzales, Petrina Jackson, Ricardo Punzalán

2018-2019 Nominating Committee: Jasmine Jones, Daniel Noonan, Dominique Luster (Chair)

The Nominating Committee members agreed it was critical to select a diverse and inclusive slate of candidates, reflective of our archival colleagues, the records we assist in preserving, and the communities we collaborate with – a wide array of communities with a number of intersectional identities and diverse with respect to race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity, to name a few factors. The Nominating Committee also sought to find candidates across different regions and from different types of institutions (academic, corporate, community archives, libraries, museums) as well as engage professionals at different stages in the profession (from early career archivists to long-standing archival veterans).

In creating the questions, the Committee wanted to engage the candidates and their ideas about diversifying the archival record and profession, leveraging their positions to encourage participation of the SAA membership in various aspects of the organization, and their roles in supporting an archival sense of responsibility and justice.

In April 2018, the committee created recorded interviews with the VP/President Elect candidates as a means of allowing candidates to share their platforms with members in a broader way. Each were asked the same questions:

1. In your past service in SAA, how have you fostered collaboration? This might be between appointed groups and/or sections, within those groups, or in other leadership positions.

2. How will you support the value of the professional archivist and ensure the survival of the historical record in this era of community archives and engaged non-professionals/memory-makers?

3. I believe it is our responsibility to educate history-minded young people on the professional opportunities available in archives. How will you work to improve the visibility of the archives profession in secondary schools and university undergraduate programs?

4. SAA has faced many challenges with the location of its annual meeting due to circumstances beyond its control after contracts have been signed. There have been labor disputes and political actions that have caused SAA members to discuss the viability of certain locations. Knowing that cancelling a contract will have long-ranging repercussions on SAA's financial situation and its ability to continue all of its programs, how would you lead a Council discussion when there is pressure from members to stand in solidarity on an issue related to the values and ethics of SAA?

Overall, the committee was pleased with the engagement with the candidates, and were very grateful to everyone we spoke with. Often if colleagues declined, it was due to time constraints with other obligations, sometimes with the caveat to approach them the next year or in the future.

The Nominating Committee encourages SAA to continue to think about ways to involve newer archives professionals in appointed and elected committee work, as well as archival colleagues across different institutions (historical societies, community archives, etc.). One thing to note was that when seeking candidates, as we sought to improve the diversity of the candidate pipeline, there are still so few people of color in leadership roles in the organization, the ones who we tend to look to for these responsibilities are tapped out. The committee is interested in things that we can do to identify and/or mentor new potential leaders from among the current membership and thinking creatively about giving those people a platform when they may still be early career; leadership tends to cluster among mid-career or late-career professionals.

A tremendous amount of gratitude goes to the Nominating Committee for their work and the SAA staff for bringing the candidate slate to fruition. A particular thank you goes to Felicia Owens for her graciousness, patience, and direct assistance.