

**Society of American Archivists Foundation
Board of Directors Meeting
August 13, 2020
Virtual Meeting**

**Proposal to Form a Communications Committee
(Prepared by JoyEllen Williams, Angelique Richardson, and Meredith Evans)**

BACKGROUND

Angelique Richardson and JoyEllen Williams, with the support of Meredith Evans, propose two discussion items during the August 14 annual meeting of the Foundation Board:

- Formation of a communications committee (Agenda Item III.A.) and
- Clarification and reevaluation of the board member recruitment process (Agenda Item III.B.)

We believe that discussing and reevaluating these areas can strengthen the relationship between the Foundation Board and its sole client, SAA. By submitting these agenda items, we hope to encourage a discussion that examines the effectiveness of current communication strategies and Board member recruitment processes. These discussions can help improve the effectiveness of the SAA Foundation.

Richardson and Williams have served as Class B members of the SAA Foundation Board for two years. During that time, we have noticed that communication efforts between the SAA Foundation and SAA may not be as effective as they could be. While SAA members often associate the SAA Foundation with strategic growth grants and travel grants, it is likely that most members are not fully aware of the purpose and efforts of the SAA Foundation. We have brainstormed improvements that can foster stronger communication between the SAA Foundation and the broader SAA community. These improvements can ultimately lead to more successful fundraising efforts. These improvements include:

- A regular, revamped form of communication focusing on the work of the Foundation and its impact on SAA;
- Utilizing social media to communicate fundraising efforts; and
- Allowing SAA section leaders to communicate the work of the Foundation among their sections.

We acknowledge that the Foundation has established methods for communicating with SAA members; however, it is important to periodically review and discuss the effectiveness of these efforts. All members, including those who have not or cannot donate to the SAA Foundation yet, should understand how the work of the Foundation supports SAA members. There may be new ways to communicate this message.

DISCUSSION

Currently, the SAA Foundation Board has six active committees: 1) Development, 2) Finance, 3) Grant Review, 4) National Disaster Recovery Fund for Archives, 5) Nominating, and 6) Archival Workers Emergency Fund. The work of these committees allows the SAA Foundation to raise and allocate funds that support the work of the archival community. Currently the SAA Foundation Board does not have a committee dedicated to communication. It appears that most of the communication duties are taken on by the Development Committee and the SAA staff. Forming a committee specifically dedicated to communications is worthy of consideration.

Potential benefits:

- More time devoted to strategic communication between SAAF and SAA;
- Increased social media outreach;
- New, streamlined methods for communication (e.g., regular newsletter,; spotlight on Foundation members in *Archival Outlook*, etc.); and
- Stronger communication between SAA Foundation and SAA sections.

Potential considerations:

- Will require an additional understanding of SAA membership and its views of the SAA Foundation;
- Number of committees already on SAA Foundation Board; and
- May require a restructuring of duties among Foundation Board members.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What are the current methods of communication between SAA and the SAA Foundation?
2. How are these communications disseminated and by whom? Is this working?
3. Does the SAA Foundation Board feel that communication is strategic?
4. Does the SAA Foundation Board feel that current modes of communication are effective in the long term?
5. What are some ways that communication can be improved between SAA and the SAA Foundation?