

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

**President's Report
(Prepared by SAA Foundation President Scott Cline)**

What a year! In so many confounding ways.

In 2019, the Board made the decision not to hold an in-person mid-year meeting as a cost saving measure. Little did we know at the time that we would not be holding an in-person annual meeting. I believe we made the correct decision regarding the mid-year meeting; the work we were able to accomplish via email speaks for itself. However, on a personal note, I am saddened that we will go for however long it will be without meeting face-to-face.

I want to focus on a few accomplishments since the 2019 annual meeting. On the last day of October, we completed the rather lengthy negotiations with Michael Kurtz when he signed a Memorandum of Understanding affirming his bequest of \$500,000 to the Foundation for creation of *The Dr. Michael J. Kurtz Initiative for the Future of Archives, Records, and Information*. The bequest will be announced officially at the 2020 meeting. I especially want to thank Board members Dennis Meissner, Margery Sly, and Nancy Beaumont who carried the ball in negotiating with Michael in person, via email, and on the phone.

COVID added an entirely new, and we hope short-lived, focus to the Foundation's work. In April, we established the Archival Workers Emergency Fund (AWEF) with seed money in the amount of \$15,000. AWEF was the brainchild of an *ad hoc* group of colleagues led by Jennifer Chapel and Lydia Tang. AWEF's goal is to assist those archivists negatively impacted by the pandemic by providing up to \$1,000 in awards that can be used to meet acute financial needs. Foundation seed money, donations from members and institutions, and transfer of funds from SAA Sections have raised \$129,150 as of July 9. AWEF has provided 139 grants to colleagues. A special thank you goes to the AWEF Review Committee comprising individuals from the *ad hoc* group and two Board members, Sharmila Bhatia and Amy Fitch.

At the 2019 Board meeting, we adopted a budget that included an increase for the Foundation's Travel Award from \$10,000 to \$12,000. With the Annual Meeting being transformed to a virtual meeting, the Foundation was presented with a unique opportunity. We decided to transfer \$6,000 from the Travel Award to AWEF; because there is no travel to the Annual Meeting, the balance was applied to Registration Awards. Thus the Foundation is subsidizing 122 registrations.

Also at the 2019 Board meeting, we adopted a payout for the Strategic Grant program of \$21,300. The Grant Review Committee recommended and the Board approved five grants. Please see the Grant Review Committee Report for details and a breakdown of grants since the inception of the program.

I try to express my appreciation to SAA staff whenever I can, but in reality it is never enough. The Foundation and the Society could not do what they do without the commitment and exceptional work carried out day after day by staff. In particular, Nancy, Felicia, and Peter have made our work much easier than it might otherwise be.

Finally, it is with no little regret that I step down as President of the Board after a wonderful three years. I believe three years is a decent amount of time to serve in that position. I am justly proud of the work the Board has done during this time, especially in growing the Strategic Grant Program, negotiating the Michael Kurtz bequest, developing the Travel Award Program, and stepping up to assist colleagues affected by COVID by creating the Archival Workers Emergency Fund. I have been blessed in my career to be involved at the leadership level with many groups and associations; I have enjoyed the Foundation work above all. I will continue to serve on the Board for the two years left of my term. I count myself lucky that I will continue to work on behalf of the Foundation and with colleagues I admire and deeply respect.