

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
August 2, 2021  
Virtual Meeting**

**2020-2021 Nominating Committee Report  
(Prepared by Committee Chair Helen Kim)**

**Slate**

The Society of American Archivists' 2020-2021 Nominating Committee has completed its work, following the Council's approved procedures. From July to November 2020, the Committee reviewed community nominations, assembled a list of nominated candidates, aggregated the candidates' qualifications, assessed the potential candidates, and conducted outreach to potential candidates to verify their willingness to serve.

The following SAA members were presented as the 2021 final slate of candidates:

**Vice President/President-Elect:** Terry Baxter, Erin Lawrimore

**Treasurer:** Sharmila Bhatia, Audra Eagle Yun, Todd Welch

**Council (3-year term):** Michelle Ganz, Jasmine Jones, Dominique Luster, Teresa Mora  
Tonia Sutherland, Kelly Wooten

**Nominating Committee:** April Anderson-Zorn, Alison Clemens, Angel Diaz, Greg  
McCoy, Dave J. Moore, Jamie Seemiller

**Statements**

In its goal to make candidate presentation more equitable, the Nominating Committee restructured the candidate presentation pages. The resume style section, which was listed first and included professional accomplishments such as job positions, presentations, and papers was entirely removed and replaced with a Biographical Statement, which allowed candidates to describe their professional commitment in context and detail. Our goal in this was to reduce the impact of institutional social capital, and as a result, change voter expectations about what should be emphasized on a candidate's page.

**Diversity Statement**

As recommended by the previous year's Nominating Committee, the 2020-2021 Committee instituted the requirement of Diversity Statement, based on the guidelines created by Ricardo Punzalan, Council Member. The Diversity Statement was presented on the candidates' pages

following the Biographical Statement. The following prompt was developed for the Diversity Statement for all candidates:

A diversity statement reflects on how one's identity and experience contribute to diversity; demonstrates awareness of DEI issues and how to frame and approach them; and identifies specific DEI strategies that apply to the position they apply for. Thus, it responds to the following questions:

- What is your own definition of diversity, equity, and inclusion?
- How have your own personal, academic, and professional experiences and expertise prepared you to advocate for inclusive, equitable practices?
- Are you aware of your own implicit biases? How have you come to this realization and how do you continue to grow as an advocate for DEI?
- How do you reflect DEI in your work? How will you model a trauma-informed and inclusive practice, and mentor others who will work with you?
- What are your specific plans and strategies that will use the position you are applying for to advance DEI within your immediate SAA unit, SAA as a whole, and beyond the organization?

## Candidate Statements

The Committee developed the following questions for the Candidate Statements, which were presented last on the candidates' pages:

**Vice President/President-Elect:** Among the strategic goals of SAA is to meet members' needs by delivering outstanding service, fostering a culture of inclusiveness and participation, and being proactive and responsive to member needs. Identify one factor that undermines diversity, equity, and inclusion in SAA and what programs and/or projects would you implement in order to overcome this barrier?

**Council:** SAA has the following core organizational values:

- being committed to advancing the public standing of archivists;
- ensuring the diversity of its membership and leaders, the profession, and the archival record;
- fostering an open and inclusive culture of creativity, collaboration, and experimentation across the association;
- providing excellent member service;
- and ensuring transparency, accountability, integrity, professionalism, and social responsibility in conducting its activities.

Select two of the core organizational values and describe how you will work with SAA groups and members to move them forward.

**Treasurer:** One of the treasurer's responsibilities is to communicate financial information to the Council and to the membership through means including financial reports, financial statements, audit results, and presentations at various meetings. As

treasurer, how would you communicate with other current and potential SAA members the overall current and future financial situation of the organization?

**Nominating Committee:** It is written in SAA's Council Statement on Black Lives and Archives that "The labor of dismantling white supremacy and structural racism in archives, and beyond, does not rest solely upon our Black membership and other people of color. White archivists, who comprise a vast majority of the field, have a responsibility to disavow racism daily in society and in our profession." How do you interpret the Nominating Committee's role in decreasing structural racism in the field to make it more equitable for BIPOC archives workers?

### **Process for Selecting Candidates**

For all offices, the Nominating Committee took the selection process seriously, considering factors such as BIPOC representation and those who identify as who identify as LGBTQIA+, and most importantly, those who have demonstrated a commitment to DEAI issues, SAA's core values, and have a history of professional service.

#### ***Vice President/President-Elect***

Council member Ricky Punzalan was responsible for selecting and contacting candidates for the President/Vice-President Elect position. The list of nominations from the SAA Nomination Form and write-in candidates contained 25 unique names. Other individuals were also considered. The number of potential candidates was narrowed down to 12 names, but all but two people declined to run. As expected, this slate was difficult to fill due to the responsibilities and expectations of the office. Some people declined due to various personal circumstances and existing professional engagements-- some people stated that they wanted to take a break from professional activities, while some Caucasian potential candidates said they wanted to step aside for BIPOC candidates. Others stated that they did not feel like they had enough experience for the office at the time.

#### ***Council***

Council member Petrina Jackson was tasked with selecting and contacting candidates for Council. 77 individuals were nominated through the SAA Nomination Form and from the prior election's write-in candidates. The list was narrowed down to seven individuals; all agreed to run except for one person.

#### ***Treasurer***

Itza Carbajal was tasked with selecting and contacting candidates for Treasurer. The list of nominations and self-nominations by SAA members contained ten unique names, although several of the names were nominated two or more times. More names were added to reach a total of 18 names. Seven candidates were contacted. Four agreed and three declined.

## ***Nominating Committee***

Valencia Johnson and Helen Kim were tasked with making the initial suggestions and contacting candidates for the 2021-2021 Nominating Committee. The list of nominations and self-nominations by SAA members contained 66 unique names. The Nominating Committee members added additional names. From the total amount of names, a group of 12 potential candidates were selected and then narrowed down to a group of seven candidates; six accepted and one declined. One candidate later withdrew and was replaced by a candidate from the original list.

## **Election Results**

SAA staff administered the election online using the Survey & Ballot Systems online balloting service. There was a participation rate of nearly 18 percent (down considerably from the 24% in the 2019-2021 election).

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:** Terry Baxter

**Treasurer (2021-2024):** Sharmila Bhatia

**Council (2021-2024):** Jasmine Jones, Dominique Luster, and Tonia Sutherland

**2021-2022 Nominating Committee:** Alison Clemens, Dave J. Moore, Angel Diaz (chair)

## **Recommendations for Council Moving Forward**

- Since voter turnout decreased, recommend that SAA explore additional methods other than social media to increase participation.
- Nomination Form should require contact information and a short description of why the individual should be considered for as a potential candidate.