

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
November 2-3, 2018  
Chicago, Illinois**

**Harold T. Pinkett Award Name Change  
(Prepared by Dorothy Berry, AAC Section Co-chair)**

The SAA Archivists and Archives of Color Section has been meeting online and in person since Spring 2018 to discuss changing the name of the Harold T. Pinkett Minority Student Award to another title that, while still honoring Harold T. Pinkett, would reflect changes in self-identification away from the use of the term “minority.” We are proposing an action item to change the award name to the Harold T. Pinkett Student of Color Award, as well as changing the text of the award description to use the term “person/student of color” in places where the text currently reads “minority.”

**BACKGROUND**

In the Spring of 2018, in response to the national call for applicants for the Harold T. Pinkett Minority Student Award, a non-AAC member who represented a regional archives affinity group protested the use of the word “minority” and questioned the award title. In response to the strong negative individual reaction, AAC leadership under the then-chair, Angel Diaz, put the name change question to an open internet poll. 67% of respondents voted “yes” to the question “Do you think the name of the Harold T. Pinkett Minority Student Award should be changed.” The results were discussed at the 2018 SAA Annual Meeting during the AAC section meeting and it was decided to have the final vote online, recognizing that many members cannot attend the Annual Meeting. 57.1% of respondents to the final poll selected to change the name to the “Harold T. Pinkett Student of Color Award.”

This name change recognizes the ongoing move towards more self-reflective and self-identifying terms for people, rather than terms that are descriptive from an outside perspective. While, from a statistical standpoint, non-white professionals are a “minority” compared to white professionals in our field, many people currently feel that “minority” is a euphemism used to avoid talking about race and that the term contributes to continued marginalization. This view on the word “minority” is a more contemporary one, and not one that was as strongly felt when the award was named.

**DISCUSSION**

While the results of the polling were strongly in favor of changing the name, and to the specific change requested here, admittedly the number of respondents itself did not represent a majority.

The vocal response at the Annual Section Meeting, however, made it clear that this change, though small, would be quite welcome. There was some concern from members that the number of applicants for the award was quite low, and that potentially the name was alienating to students who may be of age and cultural demographics that are particularly against the use of the term “minority.”

There has been a small amount of pushback to the name change itself, but upon further discussion that pushback was centered around concerns that the “Harold T. Pinkett” portion would be removed. There is no desire to remove Pinkett’s name from the award, only to update the second portion of the title. It was also noted at the Annual Section Meeting, and in some comments to the online polls, that the name change would provide better symmetry with the Archivists and Archives of Color section name.

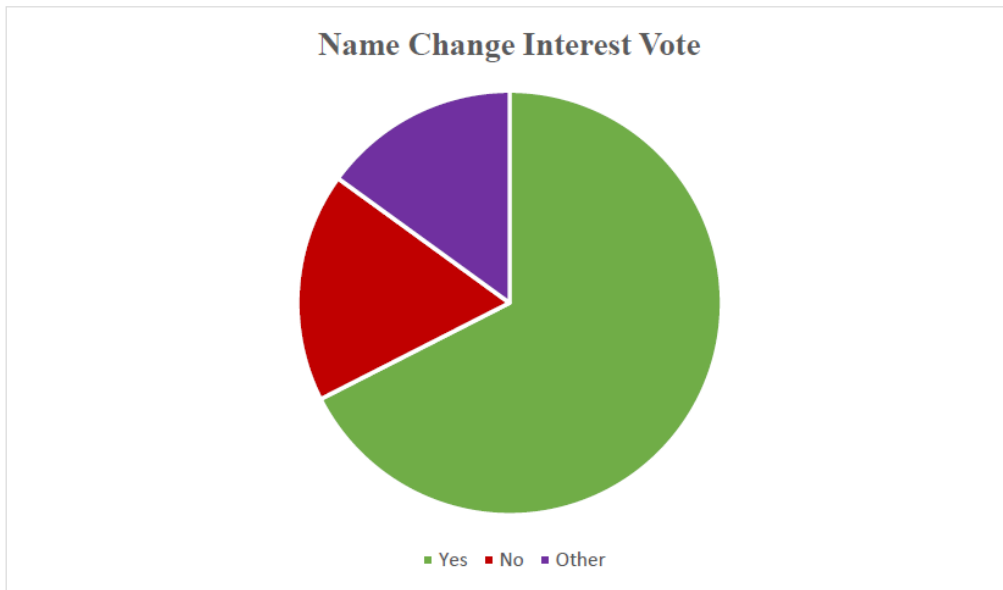
### **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT the name of the Harold T. Pinkett Minority Student Award be changed to the “Harold T. Pinkett Student of Color Award,” and that the word “minority” be replaced with “person/student of color” in all instances in the award description.**

**Support Statement:** Changing the name of the Harold T. Pinkett Minority Student Award to the Harold T. Pinkett Student of Color Award will help SAA’s awards better reflect the self-identification of many marginalized racial and ethnic groups.

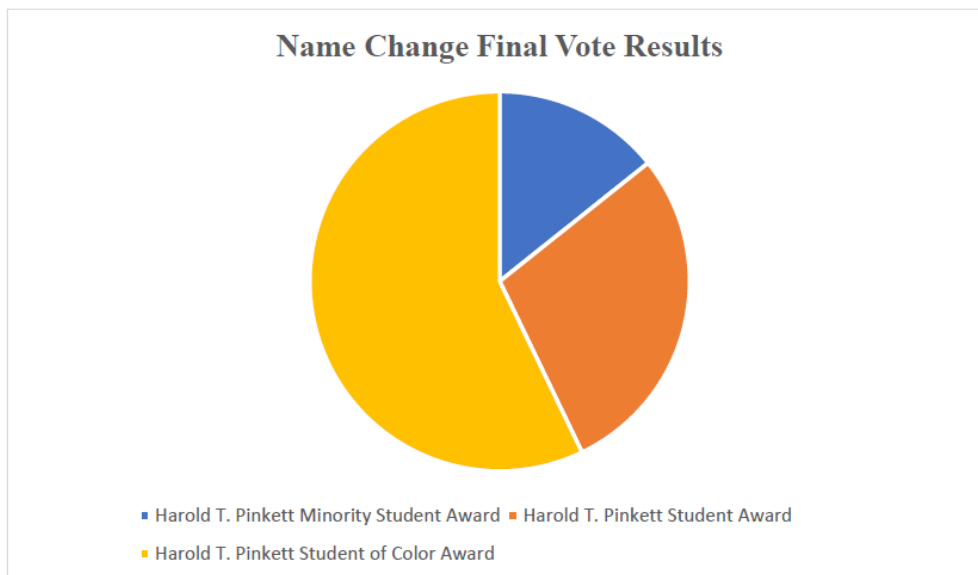
**Impact on Strategic Priorities:** This name change reflects the desire to engage with “an increasingly diverse community in a welcoming, equitable, and responsive manner,” as described in the SAA Statement on Diversity and Inclusion.

**Fiscal Impact:** None.



Responses to the question “Do you think the name of the Harold T. Pinkett Minority Student Award should be changed?:” 27 votes “yes,” 7 votes “no,” 6 distinct “other votes.”

Write-in answers categorized as “other” included “Maybe,” “No Strong Feelings Either Way,” “The term minority is a misnomer. However, as ethnic designations continue to morph there will always be a need to amend the "name" I don't care for the suggested replacements. Simply stating Harold T. Pinkett Award is sufficient. In reading about Dr. Pinkett and it's institutional home is evident the intended community and now wider audience included,” and “I hadn't really thought about it, but perhaps removing "Minority" would modernize it and change the perspective (from dominant population pov to a more general description).”



The result of the final poll were 49 responses, with 7 for “Harold T. Pinkett Minority Student Award,” 14 for “Harold T. Pinkett Student Award,” and 28 for “Harold T. Pinkett Student of Color Award.”