

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
November 1, 3, 2022  
Virtual Meeting**

**Annual Report: Committee on Public Awareness  
(Prepared by Rachel Seale)**

**For the 2021-2022 term, COPA worked on the following:**

- **2021-2022 work plan**  
As chair of COPA for 2020-2021, Rachel Seale, and vice-chair Katherine Barbera, updated the work plan to guide the committee’s work throughout the year, building upon the work outlined in the previous work plan developed by former chairs Nick Pavlik and Vince Lee. The full plan is attached to this report in Appendix A.
- **Early Career Member**  
SAA launched a new initiative in 2019 to provide early career members with opportunities to serve on SAA appointed groups, which COPA was happy to participate in again this year. Ericka Dudley was our 2021 Early Career Member.
- **ArchivesAware! blog**  
ArchivesAWARE is a blog hosted by the [Society of American Archivists](#) and managed by its [Committee on Public Awareness \(COPA\)](#). It was established in January 2016 to create an online space where professionals and students engaged in all aspects of archival work could share their experiences of and ideas for raising public awareness of archives and the value that archives and archivists add to business, government, education, and society as a whole.

Below are the blog statistics:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Posts</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Visitors</b>
<b>2016</b>	29	19,053	11,377
<b>2017</b>	24	12,838	7,545
<b>2018</b>	36	27,176	16,742
<b>2019</b>	36	28,647	17,531

<b>2020 (to date)</b>	28	29,143	17,852
<b>2021</b>	30	29,976	18,853
<b>2022</b>	11	17,963	12,176

- **#AskAnArchivist Day**

2021 was the seventh year of #AskAnArchivist Day on Twitter, which took place on October 7th.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Unique Users</b>	<b>Total Tweets</b>
<b>10/30/2014</b>	1,949	6,065
<b>10/01/2015</b>	3,184	7,845
<b>10/05/2016</b>	3,742	10,005
<b>10/04/2017</b>	4,077	8,927
<b>10/03/2018</b>	2,909	6,758
<b>10/02/2019</b>	724	6,060
<b>10/07/2020</b>	1,657	4,537
<b>10/13/2021</b>	1,229	3,111

For the 2021 #AskAnArchivist Day, select COPA members volunteered for two-hour shifts sharing tweets and retweets from the SAA Twitter account. This helped provide a central SAA “anchor” to the day’s activities, and more clearly communicated the fact that #AskAnArchivist Day was a COPA-sponsored event. Although in years past this worked very well the number of users and tweets during the event were down in 2021, even lower than 2020, although COPA began planning this event in spring 2021 instead of after the annual meeting, to have more time to do outreach and partner with other organizations (regional archives organizations, SNAP, National Coalition for History). In addition, COPA members Rachael Woody and Katherine Barbera interviewed archivists to help promote #AskAnArchivist Day and five awesome interviews ([Bridgett Pride](#), [Dominique Luster](#), [Michelle Ganz](#), [Melissa Gonzales](#), and [Terry Baxter](#)), were posted throughout October 2021. Ideas for the upcoming year were to send out short survey to archivists, introducing a theme including the #ArchivesHashtag party, create a kit that can be sent out to archivists in order to help them engage with various communities.

Kicking off American Archives Month in October, COPA hosted their fourth annual “*A Finding Aid to My Soul*” storytelling event on October 6, 2021, at 12 pm CT. This event

was recorded and is available on the [SAA website](#) and an [announcement](#) was shared on the SAA website and via listserv recapping the event and providing the link to the recording. 301 people registered, 140 attendance peak (typical attendance rate of about 50%). We estimate there are 30 alumni storytellers at this point and would like to consider doing more strategic messaging with the stories with storytelling events in the future.

- **Open House**

Keeping with the inauguration of our Open House format for the 2021 annual meeting, COPA held an Open House format again for our 2022 annual business meeting.

- **Advocacy mini-workshop**

For the 2022 Annual meeting, COPA again hosted a joint COPA/COPP mini-workshop on advocacy that evolved into a workshop “*Create an Advocacy State of Mind*” led by multiple groups: SAA Committee on Public Awareness (COPA), Committee on Public Policy (COPP), and the Regional Archival Associations Consortium (RAAC).

Resources compiled by presenters and during mini-workshop:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1F-5o0doPjBcDNY6fn2wxEka3VEb6OXkp45grzd8-HD8/edit?usp=sharing>

- **COPA and COPP**

COPA chair, Rachel Seale, and vice-chair, Katherine Barbera, and COPP chair Bryan Whitley continued the work of strengthening ties between the two committees by attending each other’s monthly conference calls. Part of this collaboration resulted in the second joint mini-workshop on advocacy at the SAA 2022 and COPP chair also collaborating with COPA on planning, participation, and enlisting potential partnerships, and using their platform to spread awareness of the upcoming #AskAnArchivist Day. COPA and COPP chairs provided recommendations to SAA Council in response to the NHPRC report on how our committees might better advocate for smaller organizations, many of which may be too small to be members of SAA but would benefit from national leadership on how to advocate for their own needs.

**Committee on Public Awareness  
2021–2022 Work Plan**

**I. Goals**

- A. Inform and engage SAA members about public awareness and COPA’s activities
- B. Generate content for *ArchivesAWARE!* blog with the goal of refreshing content monthly
- C. Collaborate on awareness campaigns with COPP, I&A, and RAAC
- D. Plan COPA activities for the 2022 SAA Annual Meeting

**II. Objectives**

- A. Encourage and enable SAA members to undertake outreach work.
- B. Collect and/or develop stories about archives and archivists.
- C. Plan for press releases, media interviews, and other activities on current events relating to archives.
- D. Create and/or coordinate outreach-related programming, toolkits and resources for membership use.

**III. Strategies**

- A. Encourage and enable outreach to the public by SAA members in 2020–2021.
  - 1. Evaluate #AskAnArchivist Day event (October) and possibly retool for next year.
  - 2. Review and enhance COPA content on SAA website:
    - a. Revisit COPA microsite and update.
    - b. Refresh as needed existing American Archives Month content.
  - 3. Collaborate with COPP, I&A, & RAAC to assess member needs for a proposed Public Awareness toolkit and Public Policy toolkit:
    - a. Develop and conduct survey via Survey Monkey
    - b. Analyze survey results
    - c. Draft and implement plan
  - 4. Draft with COPP recommendations to SAA Council how we can better advocate for smaller organizations (based on NHPRC report)
  - 5. Propose webinar series to SAA Council
    - a. Identify opportunities
    - b. Request the SAA Council to add budget for webinars
    - c. Draft and implement programming plan for coming year