

Society of American Archivists

Membership Committee: Annual Report for 2016 (Prepared by: Kate Dundon, Chair; Bertram Lyons, Outgoing Chair)

BACKGROUND

Per the Membership Committee's Council-approved guidelines, the Chair must submit an annual report to the Council by September 1.

REPORT

Section I. 2016 Membership Committee Annual Meeting Summary

1. Annual Meeting: Atlanta, GA

The Membership Committee met August 2, 2016 with 7 members in attendance. Additionally one incoming member attended, with additional guests from SAA staff being present. Also, a member of the Key Contacts subcommittee was present. Two regular members of the committee were absent with excuse.

Committee Chair Bertram Lyons reviewed the committee charge and announced incoming appointed members Laura Kopp Starr (2016–2019), Tommy Brown (2016–2019), and Jennifer Motszko (2016–2019). He also announced Matt Gorzalski's acceptance of appointment to the position of Vice-Chair/Chair elect, and he introduced in absentia the committee's new intern: Racheile Ricklefs (2016–2017).

Other appointments to the standing subcommittees were reviewed or made as follows:

- Tommy Brown accepted an appointment as co-chair of the Key Contact subcommittee.
- Laura Kopp Starr accepted an appointment as lead co-chair of the Career Development subcommittee to serve a one year term.
- Jennifer Motszko accepted an appointment as co-chair of the Career Development subcommittee to serve a two year term.
- Devhra BennettJones accepted an appointment as co-chair of the Mentoring subcommittee.
- No appointment was made for chair of the Navigator program. It was decided that the position would be offered to Diane Pugh.

Council liaison Rachel Vagts announced Holly Smith's appointment as Ex Officio Diversity Committee liaison.

The Committee then reviewed the work in progress of each subcommittee, and discussed the annual meeting events and service programs sponsored by the Membership Committee,

reminding everyone to attend and to encourage attendance by subcommittee members and volunteers.

2. Discussion Points

Racheile Ricklefs has been appointed to serve as an intern for the Membership Committee for one year. Ideas for a charge were discussed.

Committee on Education survey report on resource kit. It was decided that there should be a formal connection with the Career Development subcommittee with this project.

Council liaison Rachel Vagts announced a 2016-2017 directive from council, which is to collect information from SAA members about barriers to participating in the organization, and share collected information with the membership. This supports strategic plan goal 4.2: create opportunities for members to participate fully in the organization.

The Membership Committee sponsored several events and member service programs during the Annual Meeting. These included the New Member/First Timer Reception held on Thursday morning this year, the Mentoring Program Meet-and-Greet also held on Thursday morning, the on-site Career Center open Wednesday afternoon through Saturday morning and the Navigator Program which brings conference attendees together.

3. Activities 2016

The Membership Committee was tasked to review the effectiveness of the Key Contacts program. Key Contacts Subcommittee chairs, Michelle Sweetser and Claire Jenkins, took responsibility to carry out this research in 2016 and the results were presented to the committee during the 2016 membership committee meeting. It was agreed to continue the work of the KCS, to implement recommendations made by the chairs, including improved training of Key Contacts, and to review the program in three years.

Section II. Subcommittee Reports

Subcommittee Program Reports for 2016: 1. Key Contact Program, 2. Mentoring Program, 3. Career Development Subcommittee, 4. Navigator Program.

1. Key Contact Program Summary

Michelle Sweetser and Claire Jenkins, Subcommittee Co-Chairs

Program Summary

The Key Contact Subcommittee is a unit of the Society of American Archivists Membership Committee. It is comprised of 2 co-chairs and 11 District Representatives overseeing geographic regions covering the United States and international countries. The Representatives work with 68 appointed Key Contacts to reach out to SAA's membership in greeting and welcoming new

members, promoting the value of SAA's services, and periodically offering information on various archival resources.

Key Contact Meeting at the 2016 SAA Annual Meeting

The Key Contact Subcommittee met on August 3, 2016 in Atlanta, Georgia. Co-chairs Claire Jenkins and Michelle Sweetser led the meeting. Michelle Sweetser joined Claire Jenkins as co-chair in August 2015.

From August 2015 to August 2016, 230 new SAA members were contacted; 17 volunteers became Key Contacts to fill vacancies due to resignation, relocation, or term expiration.

Claire reported on accomplishments since August 2015 the Roster Map Revision Update, the goal of which was to align the districts to regional archival groups, thereby making it easier to find Key Contacts replacements and make connections between KCs and new members. The majority of the research had been done the previous year, while the implementation of the new district alignment was done during 2015-2016.

Claire also led the discussion of this past year's Key Contacts Working Group, which was charged with researching the purpose and effectiveness of the Key Contacts program. This working group developed a survey of both Key Contacts and District Representatives to assist in assessing the program. The surveys were distributed via email on April 1 with a deadline of April 8, 2016. Thirty-five Key Contacts and eight District Representatives responded. The conclusion of this working group's research is that the Key Contacts program should proceed as it exists but with a few specific improvements based on what the sub-committee thinks is best for the program.

Current Vacancies

A Key Contact is needed for each of the following districts:

- Key Contract (District 6 – South Carolina)
- Key Contact (District 7 – Arkansas)
- Key Contact (District 11 – Canada, AB, BC, MB, SK)

Current Activities and Future Plans

The remainder of the meeting was a discussion of the Key Contacts Working Group's recommendations based on its research.

Future plans include the following:

Follow up from the Key Contacts Working Group's Research:

- Retain the Key Contacts group as part of the Membership Committee with consideration for the below suggested solutions, particularly in the areas of communication and engagement mechanisms.
- Create opportunities for KCs to be more engaged and to develop more robust activities for the KC program.
- Provide more focused training to all KCs using standardized tools.

2. Mentoring Program Subcommittee Summary

Subcommittee Co-Chairs, Michael Zaidman and Gabrielle Spiers

Administering the Mentorship Program

The following members are rotating off the Mentoring Program Subcommittee in 8/2016:

- Michael Zaidman, Co-Chair
- Alexandra Orchard, member
- Jeremy Brett, member
- Devhra Bennett Jones, member
- Andrea Gietzen, member

The following SAA members have agreed to join Subcommittee starting 8/2016:

- Devhra BennettJones, Co-Chair*
- Dean DeBolt, member
- Janet DeVries, member
- Michelle Ganz, member
- Jamie Martin, member

*Devhra finished a term, but will take another turn on the committee as a co-chair.

As of July 28, 2016, there were 63 Protégés and 71 Mentor volunteers active in the program (134 participants total). Of these, there are 14 Protégés waiting to be matched.

Of the 71 Mentors currently matched, 2 have renewed seven times, 2 renewed renewed six times, 3 renewed five times, 7 renewed four times, 9 renewed nine times and 20 are repeats!

For the total from the SAA Mentoring Program Database 2011/09/04 to 2016/07/28, there have been 371 Mentors and 430 Protégés.

Subcommittee activities

- Ongoing tasks that maintain the program:
 - Reviewed and updated the database Protégés and Mentors to identify matches and manage information about participants.
 - Contacted recently "expired" Mentors to see if they are interested in being matched with another Protégé, and submitted calls to the memberships of various SAA sections and roundtables for Mentors.

- Met via conference call on 10/1/2015 to welcome new members and to discuss ways of promoting the program, particularly during National Mentoring Month.
- Distributed the mentoring survey via email to all active program participants in January (National Mentoring Month). 74 participants filled out the survey. A summary of the results is appended to this report.
- Publicized the Mentoring Program several ways:
 - SNAP blog post on November 11 by co-chair Gabrielle Spiers about her experience with mentors
 - Received inquiry from committee member Alexandra Orchard about mentor data to develop an article about women in the mentor community
 - Committee member Michael Zaidman spoke with Claudia Ocello from Museum Partners Consulting on behalf of AAM to develop a similar mentor program for their members
 - Two past protégés (Holly Croft & Stephanie Bennett) will write about their positive experiences in upcoming issues of Archival Outlook to generate others to participate
 - Committee member Jeremy Brett wrote a blurb for *In The Loop* in the spring to generate more participation.
- During National Mentoring Month, committee members sent out messages to encourage members to sign up to be a mentor in almost all the committees, sections and state and regional groups.
- After further mentoring discussions with the Electronic Records Section, it was decided that the Navigator program is more appropriate to further their goal of connecting with born digital students.
- The Mentoring program Meet-and-Greet will take place on Thursday morning at the SAA Annual Meeting again next to the New Member / First Timer Coffee Break.

Ongoing issues/ goals for the upcoming year

- Continue to foster meaningful mentoring relationships between SAA members by matching Mentors with Protégés and soliciting Mentor volunteers via group listservs and personal connections.
- Inquire about improving the database with SAA.
- Perhaps work with the Certified Archivists group to offer points for certification for being a mentor. Nancy Beaumont hopes to talk to the CA president to discuss this matter. CA Board member Tomaro Taylor was also contacted about this option and perhaps it will be on an upcoming CA agenda.
- Committee members need to be very responsive to applications that come in. We try to respond in five days, but should respond as quickly as the applications appear.
- Analyze the less favorable responses from the 2016 survey, and discuss how we can address these concerns and generally improve the experience of program participants.
- Continue to promote the program during National Mentoring Month by contacting active participants in January each year, and highlighting the program in “In the Loop” during this time.
- Be very thorough in asking expired mentors to renew since many are willing to continue to volunteer.

3. Career Development Subcommittee Summary

Matthew Gorzalski, Chair

Career Center Subcommittee Membership

Matt Gorzalski, Chair
Jennifer Johnson
Melissa Gonzales
Gerrienne Schaad
Meredith Lowe
Carlos Salgado (ex-officio SAA)

Planning Activities

Based on past experience, the subcommittee decided not to have the Career Center open on Saturday. Melissa participated in a SNAP Chat with members of the SNAP Roundtable (students and new archival professionals) to learn about their perception, past use, and desired offerings of the Career Center. Participation was small but they indicated that resume and career counseling was helpful. The SNAP Roundtable members suggested mock interviews as a new offering which the Subcommittee initiated. Their other suggestions included advice for employers on writing ‘decent’ position announcements and avoidance of hiring bias, year-round services and already prepared resources, and one-off mentoring for specific job searches.

These latter suggestions were either deemed too logistically difficult, or we felt that such resources are already available. For instance, the Career Learning Center, which is a part of SAA’s job webpage, provides readily available YouTube videos on resumes, interviews, and other career advice. Also, SAA’s mentoring program can not only benefit a mentee in a specific job search, it fosters longer and deeper relationships beyond one-off mentoring. The possible unawareness of these resources among students and young professionals is perhaps an indication that the Membership Committee and/or SAA should advertise them more, possibly in new member welcome letters and Key Contact emails. To raise awareness of the Career Learning Center, advertisements with QR codes linking to the Center were placed in the annual meeting Career Center.

Career Center Offerings

The Career Center again offered resume/career counseling by appointment or walk-in, job boards and a file box for employers to post positions, a board and file box for job seekers to post resumes, free handouts on resume and cover letter writing, and a private space for on-site interviews. New this year were mock interviews. We had far more interviewer volunteers than those who signed up to be an interviewee. The mock interviews were well-received and one resulted in an actual job offer. Given the number of archivists who signed up to be an interviewer, we are optimistic about the future of the mock interviews.

Career Center by the Numbers

Counseling/Resume Advisers: 46 (up from 45 in 2015)

Scheduled Advisees: 41 (up from 32 in 2015)

Walk-in Advisees: 32

Jobs Posted on Board: 41

Resumes Posted on Board: 20

Private Room Appointments: 1 (down from 4 in 2015)

*Some people used this space for interviews on a walk-in basis, but they were not counted

Mock Interviewers: 16

Mock Interviewees: 8

Future Concerns

Melissa Gonzales and Gerriane Schaad will step down from the subcommittee. One resume/counseling advisee had a bad experience and was criticized harshly. Next year's call for adviser volunteers should emphasize that they are to offer constructive criticism.

4. Navigator Program Subcommittee Summary

Kate Dundon, Chair

2016 Navigator Program Subcommittee members:

- Kate Dundon, Chair
- Rachael Dreyer, Women's Archives Roundtable, member
- Caitlin Wells, Student & New Professionals (SNAP) Roundtable, member

Online sign-up form went live on June 1, officially closed on July 1.

59 total responses (down from 113 responses in 2015). A few additional matches were made after a call for mentors to the SAA Leaders list. Total 31 matches; 62 participants total (2015: 114 participants; 2014: 126 participants; 2013: 70 participants).

A Google Drive folder was created to organize documentation, as well as basic [workflow](#) for administering the program.

A survey was not administered after conference as it was in 2013 and 2014.

Kate Dundon is rotating off as chair. No chair has yet been identified for 2017.

Section III. Conclusion

2016 has been a productive year for the Membership Committee and its Subcommittees. The Committee continues to work towards building strong connections between the organization and its members and to introduce valuable resources to SAA members. As initiatives, such as the Navigator Program and Career Center become more formalized we are able to better assess their impact and improve our offerings. We hope to continue to be included by Council in conversations related to the needs of the membership, especially in light of questions related to member benefits (sections, roundtables, etc.), member dues, and member participation. We look forward to continuing to work as a Committee to develop programming of import to the membership as a whole.

Appendix

SAA strategic goals addressed by the Membership Committee:

Goal 1: Advocating for Archives and Archivists

While the Membership Committee does not explicitly contribute this goal, we believe that our general duty of identifying nonmember needs and perceptions supports the goal of attracting non-members to join SAA, which strengthens SAA's ability to advocate for Archives and Archivists.

Goal 2: Enhancing Professional Growth

The Membership Committee supports this goal most strongly, and more specifically goal 2.3. Our four programs: Key Contacts, Mentoring, Career Development, and Navigator, all aim to enhance the professional growth of not only new SAA members and students, but existing members who have volunteered to mentor or guide others in entering and navigating this profession. These programs are all designed to facilitate connections between students/new professionals with mid-career and/or experienced archivists, which we believe has the potential to radically enhance their success in the field.

Goal 3: Advancing the Field

While the Membership Committee does not explicitly contribute this goal, the opportunities we provide for members to connect with and learn from each other supports the creation of partnerships and collaborations with allied professionals, thereby enhancing professional knowledge in general. By fostering a welcoming environment for new members, we support a professional environment in which more archivists engage in research and disseminate their work.

Goal 4: Meeting Members' Needs

The Membership Committee excels in supporting this goal, specifically goals 4.2 and 4.3. Our programs provide a wealth of leadership opportunities to a diverse range of SAA members. (The Key Contacts subcommittee alone provides over 60 leadership positions.) Additionally, surveys conducted by all four of our programs indicate a high degree of success in that the majority of participants enjoyed their experience. Our programs provided a rich environment for multiple styles of networking within the organization.