**Report given on RAAC’s 2018-2019 activities on the Joint Working Group on Issues and Awareness**

For those who don’t know me, my name is Rachel Chatalbash, and I’ve been representing RAAC on the Joint Working Group on Issues and Awareness for the past three years. I wanted to share a little bit about the group and what we have been doing.

The Joint Working Group coordinates efforts and initiatives of RAAC, the Council of State Archivists, the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators, and the Society of American Archivists in areas of common concern, including:

1) coordinating action to address public policy and legislative concerns for the archives profession

2) cooperating on efforts to raise awareness of the value of archives and

3) coordinating strategies for the preservation of and access to archival records throughout the US.

At a minimum, our group meets monthly via conference call to coordinate and update our organizations on advocacy and awareness issues facing the archives field.

Over the course of this year, we have focused on a range of political advocacy efforts, including coordinated letter-writing campaigns about the issues most important to our various archives communities. We released several joint statements, such as one in support of NHPRC reauthorization, and we are currently working on another articulating our stance that public officials should use official government email accounts for the conduct of public business.

Some of you may have participated in the successful Archives on the Hill event held last year prior to the Joint Annual Meeting in Washington DC. The Archives on the Hill event had 67 archivists meeting in nearly 50 Congressional offices to discuss the importance of federal funding for archival programs. Archives on the Hill was the first opportunity for archivists working across all our organizations to directly address archival topics and issues with key members of Congress. In order to continue these efforts, we created a webinar on how to conduct congressional visits locally with a member of Congress. The webinar was launched in April and focuses on how to plan and carry out meetings in the district offices of Congress. A recording of the webinar is now available on SAA’s course portal and NAGARA’s advocacy page, and I encourage you to watch it. Our hope is that, through programs like this, archivists throughout the country and in many of our regionals, will become more comfortable with advocacy and more skilled at addressing professional issues through advocacy work.

I look forward to continuing to represent RAAC on this Joint Working Group this year. If you have any questions about the Group’s activities, please feel free to reach out to me by email, or catch me after this meeting.