

Description Section

Council Liaison: Stephen R. Curley

Report Submitted by: Katherine Madison

2021-2022 Steering Committee Roster

Position	Name	Term Start	Term End
Chair	Katherine Madison	8/15/2021	9/1/2022
Vice Chair / Chair-Elect	Ashley Gosselar	8/15/2021	8/15/2022
Immediate Past Chair	Katherine Duvall	8/15/2021	9/1/2022
Secretary	William Clements	8/15/2020	9/1/2022
Member-at-Large	Kelly Bolding	8/15/2020	9/1/2022
Member-at-Large	Elizabeth Coup	8/15/2021	9/1/2023
Newsletter Editor	Lori Dedeyan	6/3/2019	9/1/2022
Early-Career Member	Nora Jimenez	8/15/2021	9/1/2022
Web Liaison	Scott Kirycki	3/1/2019	9/1/2025
Ex Officio	Matthew Gorham	9/15/2020	9/1/2022
Ex Officio	Gregory Wiedeman	9/15/2021	9/1/2023

ACTIVITIES

Completed: -We submitted, on behalf of Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia (A4BLiP), a proposal to the Standards Committee of SAA for the endorsement of their Anti-Racist Descriptive Resources as an external standard. -We formalized an editorial manual and administrative documentation for the section blog, Descriptive Notes. -We completed an ownership transition of shared drive, containing all Description Section documentation from 2017 to the present, to a more sustainable model.

Ongoing: -We continue to develop the section's blog, Descriptive Notes, which is now in its second year. We solicit, edit, and publish new series and posts on all topics related to archival description. -We continue to add resources to the Description Section Documentation Portal on our micro-site.

New: -We will transition to a new editorial team for Descriptive Notes, including having a new Lead Blog Editor. -We will collaborate with TS-EAS in the upcoming year(s) as the technical subcommittee begins the evaluation and revision of EAD. -Other projects to be determined by the 2022-2023 Steering Committee as the year progresses.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal 1: Advocating for Archives and Archivists

1.3 The Description Section has provided "leadership in ensuring the completeness, diversity, and accessibility of the historical record" by maintaining and adding to our Documentation

Portal on our section micro-site. 1.4 Through its blog, the Section provides a publication platform that allows archivists “to articulate the value of archives.”

Goal 2: Enhancing Professional Growth

2.2 The Section provides a publication forum through our blog, Descriptive Notes, about current and evolving descriptive practices in archives. 2.3 Through our blog and our Documentation Portal, the Section provides affordable and accessible information about archival description and descriptive resources.

Goal 3: Advancing the Field

3.1 Through the Section’s collaboration with Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia (A4BLiP) on their proposal to the SAA Standards Committee, we have contributed to the development of “new standards, guidelines, and best practices” for archives. 3.2 The Section “foster[s] and disseminate[s] research in and about the field” through our blog and our Documentation Portal. We have committed to sharing updates from other archival groups - such as TS-EAS and TS-DACS - through this blog platform. This year we included updates from TS-EAS, TS-DACS, and SNAC in our annual meeting to keep our membership informed. 3.3 The Section partnered with A4BLiP in the past year on the topic of anti-racist archival description. We plan to collaborate with TS-EAS in the upcoming year.

Goal 4: Meeting Members Needs

4.1 / 4.4 The Section membership is regularly kept up to date on activities and opportunities to contribute via the section’s listserv. A report was made to membership at our annual business meeting, where we also invited members to come forward with projects and ideas. Steering committee members are available for questions and comments.

ANNUAL MEETING

Number of Attendees: 111

Summary of Meeting Activities: The annual section meeting was held virtually on July 18. The outgoing chair (Kate Madison) and incoming chair (Ashley Gosselar) opened the meeting by sharing updates on the work of the Description Section over the last year. Representatives from TS-DACS, TS-EAS, SNAC, and Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia (A4BLiP) then gave updates on the work of their groups. The remainder of the meeting was a moderated panel discussion on the emotional labor of archival description, featuring the four authors from the section blog (Descriptive Notes) series on archival labor.

Link to Meeting Minutes:

SELF-ASSESSMENT

How would you describe the health or energy of your section? How engaged are your members?

The section Steering Committee is active in and committed to a number of projects with long-term scope. This year we had no difficulty soliciting candidates for committee membership. We had an excellent turnout for our annual meeting and have been able to maintain a regular blog posting schedule from responses to our calls to membership. However, measuring the engagement of our larger membership is difficult.

QUESTIONS FOR COUNCIL

No questions or concerns at the present time.