

## **Pulling Together: Corporate Archives and Public Relations**

**JENNIFER DAVIS MCDAID**

**Abstract:** For the past two years, the Norfolk Southern archives has collaborated on a project that promotes rail safety and railroad history. Working together with NS Corporate Communications and an outside public relations firm, the archives has helped to tell the stories of localities in the Norfolk Southern system.

Norfolk Southern's Operation Awareness and Response safety train visits more than 20 cities and towns annually to provide rail safety training to local first responders. A website (<http://pulling-together.com/>) follows the safety train on its travels, and the Archives provides several components for each stop along the way: a brief history of the town, a historical overview of rail operations there, and images from the Archives collection of the area. These have included photographs of stations, locomotives, and employees, as well as postcards, advertisements, and railroad timetables.

The NS team works together to connect businesses, improve sustainable practices, and enhance safety and service across its 22-state rail network. Now, with the assistance of the Archives, they also share a local perspective on railroad history. This collaborative work has created an engaging web site and sparked an appreciation of the Archives as a useful resource—one that is relevant to current business needs.

### **About the Author:**

*Jennifer Davis McDaid* is Norfolk Southern's historical archivist. She is a native of Norfolk, Virginia, and has worked for NS for eight years. She has been an archivist since 1990, when she began working at the Library of Virginia. She is a graduate of the College of William and Mary. In addition to managing the historical archives, she is also responsible for Norfolk Southern's museum and the corporate art collection.