

19 December 2008

To: Jamie Roth, Chair-SAA Membership Committee

From: Tanya Zanish-Belcher, Chair-Task Force on the Mentoring and Navigator Programs

Task Force members: Diana Banning (District Representative-Membership Committee), Terry Baxter (Chair, Diversity Committee), Adriana Cuervo (Career Center Coordinator-Membership Committee), Brian Doyle (Director of Member & Technical Services, SAA), Maria Estorino (Diversity Committee), Russell James (Records Management Roundtable), Renna Tuten (Intern-Membership Committee), Karen Morse Walton (Navigator Coordinator-Women Archivists Roundtable), Teresa Yoder (Mentor Coordinator-Membership Committee)

The charge of the Task Force, as assigned at the August 2008 SAA Annual Meeting, was to examine both of these programs, and make recommendations to the Membership Committee as to what should be done in the future. The Task Force communicated by e-mail and had one conference call at the end of October.

**Immediate recommendations for action items for the Membership Committee:**

- Develop mission statement/charge for Mentoring Program
- Develop position description for Mentoring Coordinator and charge/role for subcommittee
- Work with Women's Archivists Committee to develop position description for Navigator Coordinator(s)
- Develop set of FAQs for anyone interested in the archives profession, available from the Mentoring webpage. This could also include a listing of volunteer archivists, willing to answer simple questions.
- The Membership Committee should host a table at the annual meeting (in the Vendor Hall), which includes information about membership programming (including the Mentoring/Navigator programs).

## **Additional recommendations based on initial set of questions/comments:**

### **1. Creation of subcommittees for both the Mentoring and Navigator Programs:**

The Task Force agreed that forming subcommittees for the Mentoring Program and the Navigator Programs would greatly help the coordinators. For the Mentoring Program, a subcommittee of three (with the Chair continuing to serve as a member of the Membership Committee) is recommended.

Among the duties of the Subcommittee (and other volunteers and appointees as needed):

- Define role of each subcommittee member
- Articulate benefits and expectations of both mentors and mentees and make this available on the SAA website
- Expand SAA Mentoring website to include additional online resources and links
- Revise the mentoring application to include a 250-word biographical statement. Recommended language: “In 250 words or less, please explain what you are looking for in a mentor and what your background and interests are”
- Access is restricted to SAA members only
- Collect the appropriate biographical and professional information from mentors and mentees to ensure good matches
- Consider developing an application for mentors
- Develop training for both mentors; possible joint workshop for mentors and mentees
- After other issues are solved, add a checkbox to the membership form, indicating interest in serving as a Mentor

### **2. Establish a subcommittee for the Navigator Program, which is jointly overseen by the Membership Committee and the Women Archivists’ Roundtable.** There should be co-chairs, with representation from both the

Committee and Roundtable. Among the subcommittee's duties:

- a. Recruit for the Navigator Program
- b. Matching partners for the annual meeting
- c. Overseeing promotional information
- d. Organizing events at the annual meeting

**3. The SAA membership should be surveyed about the Mentoring and Navigator Programs**

The Task Force recommends that the Membership Committee (or an appointed group, working in conjunction with SAA staff) pursue surveying the SAA membership about the Mentoring program, and based on a suggestion by Brian, would also recommend developing a series of surveys targeting various subsections of SAA, in addition to a membership-wide survey. Each survey should have an objective and targeted audience, and these could include current and former participants and other targeted groups.

Specific questions could be asked about expectations and perceptions of the mentoring program, as well as suggestions for the future direction of programming.

**4. The Task Force also recommends officially reviewing what kinds of programs, if any, have been established by regional and state archival organizations for mentoring.**

There may be potential for collaboration, or providing links from the SAA Mentoring website.

**5. Expand promotional activities for the Mentoring and Navigator programs**

- a. Promote the programs on the SAA website and via e-mail blasts
- b. Expand the mentoring website, and includes links to guidelines and other resources
- c. Become a mentor added as a direct link from the front page of the SAA website

d. Explore Archival Outlook column, focusing on these programs

**6. For the Navigator program, the Task Force recommends returning to text in the program, as opposed to a box on the registration page.**

This text will provide information about the program and contact information. The Task Force also discussed creating guidelines and a directory of those who have previously participated as Navigators (in order to prepare in advance for next year). A meeting at the annual meeting was also recommended, and possibly these partners could be encouraged to meet their partner at the New Member breakfast.

Sample Text for program:

“SAA's Women Archivists Roundtable and SAA Membership Committee are pleased to sponsor the Navigator Program, which matches experienced members with new members or first-time attendees. Your navigator can help guide you through the maze of this large meeting! All attendees are welcome to request a navigator or volunteer to serve in this important role. For more information, contact Karen Walton Morse at phone number, or navigator [ @ ] forums.archivists.org. You'll be contacted in [date] and matched with a partner. The deadline to request a navigator is [date].”

**7. The Task Force also recommends the developing of guidelines for the Navigators/Navigatees that can be distributed in advance as well as including a column about the program in the June Archival Outlook Newsletter.**

**8. Explore new partnerships focusing on our diverse members.** Explore potential programming with the Diversity Committee and the Archives of Color Roundtable, the Latin American and Caribbean Roundtable, and the LGBTAA Roundtable.

- a. The Roundtables and Sections should also be encouraged to develop informal mentoring networks where partners can connect based on similar topics/areas of interest.

**9. Provide more opportunities for connecting and networking for the Mentor/Mentee and Navigator/Navigatee partners**

- a. Scheduling official events at the annual meeting
- b. Explore using wikis as a communication tool
- c. Receptions at the annual meeting; expand New Members' breakfast to include Navigators

**10. Explore new methods for recruiting mentors and Navigators**

- Recruit SAA leaders and SAA Fellows for mentoring
- Recruit Key Contacts as possible resources
- Ask for two designees from each Roundtable and Section to serve as mentors
- Recruit Navigators during the winter/spring; put out call to Roundtables and Sections/Archives listserv/Archival Outlook
- Include column by mentor/mentee in Archival Outlook describing their positive experience and calling for recruits

**11. Provide official recognition to the volunteers who participate as mentors and Navigators**

- a. Official certificate from SAA; official acknowledgments and thank yous at Business meeting or in Archival Outlook
- b. Investigate ACA credit for mentoring
- c. Ensuring ribbons for Mentors and Navigators at the annual meeting
- d. Mentoring luncheon with recognition, etc.