

Membership Committee

Minutes

August 2, 2006

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Washington, DC

Membership Committee Chair Gerriane Schaad called the meeting to order at 10:05. The committee met jointly with members of the Diversity Committee to discuss matters of mutual concern.

In attendance:

Membership Committee:

Gerriane Schaad (Chair)
Phillips (Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect)
Diane Kaplan (Incoming Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect)
Jamie Roth (District 1)
Emily Rafferty (District 3)
Janet Carleton (District 5)
Tanya Zanish-Belcher (District 6)
Diane Maher (District 10)
Adriana Cuervo (Incoming Mentoring Program Coordinator)
Jennifer Meehan (Career Center Coordinator)

Key Contacts:

Peggy Alexander
Jessica Lemieux
Mary Margaret Bell

Diversity Committee:

Thomas Battle (Chair)
Terry Baxter
Jennie Diaz-Guilbaud
Joel Wurl

Ex officio:

Elizabeth Adkins (SAA President)
Lee Miller (Incoming Council Liaison)
Kathi Neal (Outgoing Council Liaison)

Scott Schwartz (Chair, Nominating Committee)
Jane Rosario (Former Member, Membership Committee)
Nancy Beaumont (SAA Staff)
Brian Doyle (SAA Staff)
Jeanette Spears (SAA Staff)

Discussion on Diversity

Outgoing Council member Kathi Neal reported on Council's strategic planning efforts over the past 18 months. As described in a recent article published in *Archival Outlook* and on the SAA Web site (http://www.archivists.org/governance/strategic_priorities.asp), Council started with the development of a "radar screen" that identifies over a dozen issues that may impact the Society in the future. These issues were subsequently presented at the 2005 leadership forum in New Orleans and to the general membership.

Three top issues of highest priority (i.e., technology, diversity, and public awareness) were then selected and Council task forces worked to solicit feedback from key stakeholders and to refine the issue statements. Neal was the chair of the working group that addressed diversity. Neal reported that the group received good input and was able to incorporate this feedback into the issue statement (*see link above*). Finally, Neal pointed out that, while the statement defines diversity in relatively narrow terms (i.e., race and ethnicity), Council is aware that a broader definition exists that includes other aspects of diversity such as gender, institutional context, and geography

Phillips: What can the Membership Committee do to help advance this issue?

Beaumont: "American Archives Month," the highest-ranked activity identified for the public awareness issue, could provide a vehicle to deliver a variety of messages on specified themes to target audiences. What if the 2007 "theme" was "Diversity of the Record"?

Neal: Three highest-ranked proposed activities for diversity are as follows:

1. Produce specialized and bilingual promotional literature for college placement offices and fairs, using Hispanic universities (HACUs) and historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) as primary target audiences.
2. Translate into Spanish existing brochures and selected content on the website to serve as a "welcome mat" for Latino populations.
3. Develop a fact sheet that highlights current diversity-based efforts, focusing particularly on efforts with underrepresented groups.

Zanish-Belcher: Will there be materials about Archives Month on the SAA Web site?

Beaumont: You bet!

Diaz-Guilbaud: Active in MARAC; Currently working with the DC Caucus to organize the “10th Annual Washington DC Metropolitan Archives Fair.” Information to be sent out by MARAC through press releases.

Diversity Committee Chair, Thomas Battle, spoke on the need to look at issue from historical perspective, as well as the need to collect information through membership processing procedures to inform diversity issues. Battle suggested that the Diversity Committee may be able to propose membership initiatives, commenting that we often look for new members within the profession but also need to look outside the profession. SAA may be able to reach those external audiences through organizations of individuals with an interest in archives (e.g. users, our “clients”) who don’t necessary see themselves as allies to the archival profession. For example, Battle mentioned an upcoming joint conference of the various ethnic groups within ALA (<http://www.ala.org/jclc/>) as an opportunity to do leader-to-leader outreach and campaigning to those organizations.

SAA Staff member Brian Doyle suggested that committee members keep in mind the different desired outcomes of the current issue statement, noting that “success” may or may not translate to increased membership in SAA. For example, one desired outcome is that “underrepresented populations will have greater knowledge, skills, and support to identify, manage, preserve, use, and interpret records vital to our cultural heritage.” Therefore, a question for the Membership Committee to consider is, how can SAA engage with allies who are not practicing archivists in a member-like relationship?

Wurl: In addition to users or “clients,” SAA should consider professionals in information science and special collections as other target audiences, noting that there are established organizations for minorities in these professions.

Diaz-Guilbaud and Phillips reported on NARA’s initiatives focused on recruiting greater numbers of Hispanic Americans at NARA. The National Archives has a new recruitment office and the NARA Web site now features Spanish-language content.

Battle: SAA needs to diversify in different ways. For instance, the Society has advocacy awards for those outside the profession. We need to find ways to create a “space” within SAA to welcome people with various professional interests.

Doyle provided a summary on findings of the Membership Development Task Force, which identified a number of reporting requirements that should be implemented in the new association management system (AMS) to be deployed this fall. Gender needs to be added to that list.

Schaad: Need to add education, too.

At 11:00, the joint committee meeting was adjourned and members of the Diversity Committee departed, along with Adkins, Beaumont, Neal, and Spears.

Schaad reconvened the meeting and began with some general comments regarding committee procedures, including a reminder that all Key Contacts invited to attend committee meetings. The committee officers and district representatives are voting members of the committee. Phillips added that the committee members are typically selected for nomination from those individuals who have served as Key Contacts.

Schaad introduced Diane Kaplan as the incoming Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect.

Scott Schwartz, former chair of the Membership Committee and current Chair of the Nominating Committee, provided a report on the Peterson Student Scholarship, which provides an opportunity to draw student members into the organization. The intent of the scholarship is to support those student members who wish to engage in the work of SAA through service on committees, task forces, etc. Jessica Lemieux is this year's first-ever recipient of the Peterson Student Scholarship.

Key Contact Program

Phillips thanked the Key Contacts for their efforts, noting that the retention of members is largely due to their hard work. Phillips also remarked on the successful use of targeted email announcements to solicit volunteers to fill Key Contact vacancies. In addition, in the last two years, Richard Pearce-Moses and Elizabeth Adkins directed SAA staff to post a committee volunteer self-nomination form on the SAA Web site to assist in the appointments process. Last year, that form listed Key Contact vacancies.

Committee members suggested that SAA staff send a message to the Key Contact listserv with information about the availability of this form and the deadline for self-nominations so that Key Contacts may include this information in emails to new members.

Mary Margaret Bell added that she has sent general promotional information from SAA to other state lists for archivists—e.g., Kentucky Council on Archives.

Jamie Roth pointed out that when Key Contacts send messages to outside lists, they are in effect addressing many non-members. For those messages that need to be limited to the membership, is there a mechanism by which Key Contacts can generate email lists, selected by state, to contact SAA members? Doyle indicated that staff would investigate methods for accommodating this need.

Phillips reported that Key Contacts are continuing to receive notice from members that they have renewed but have not received confirmation of their renewal. What is staff's procedure for notifying renewing members of their renewal? Doyle replied that staff had instituted a new procedure several months ago by which all renewing members should receive an email confirmation once their dues have been processed. If the confirmation has not been received within a week or two, members should contact the office.

Diane Kaplan noted that the member renewal forms/invoices need to be updated.

Lee Miller added that SAA needs to track and generate reports on membership trends vis-à-vis other events and programs. For example, how many new members did we gain as a result of the annual meeting, a particular workshop, etc? It is important to have ways of measuring success.

Mentoring Program

Schaad provided a report on proposed changes in the Mentoring Program. Historically, the program coordinator has accepted applications from members and paired protégés with suitable mentors based on areas of interest, geographic location, etc. This work has been very time consuming. As an alternative, SAA is planning to create a Mentoring Directory that would list those members willing to serve as mentors along with contact information and a personal statement. Members seeking a mentor would then be able to search the directory and initiate contact on their own. Doyle will be working with incoming Mentoring Program Coordinator, Adriana Cuervo, in the coming months to further identify the requirements and functionality of this new application.

Career Center

Meehan reported on this year's Career Center activities, which were more dynamic and well-publicized than in previous years. Five recruiters participated in the center and Diane Kaplan developed a hand-out on cover-letter writing tips.

Native American Representative on Membership Committee

Gerrienne Schaad reported on recent conversations with Briana Bob on the need to clarification the Native American representative's role on the Membership Committee. It was agreed that Bob will serve as *additional* key contact for Native American members. Question remained to be answered include, to whom should the Native American Representative/Key Contact report and is this individual a full member of the committee. Schaad indicated that she would work to resolve these questions.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00.