

SAA Mentoring Program Subcommittee

Report to the Membership Committee by Subcommittee Co-chairs, Teresa Mora and Alison Stankrauff

December 3, 2012

Administering the Mentorship Program

As of December 3, 2012, there were a total of 115 protégés and 85 mentor volunteers active in the program. Of these, 11 protégés are waiting to be matched, most of whom have specific areas of focus they are interested in. Of the 85 mentors, 80 are currently matched and 8 mentors currently mentor more than one protégé. At this time, we aim to match protégés with mentors within two weeks of application. Efforts in this behalf on the part of the Subcommittee in the past year have included:

- Reviewing the lists of protégés and mentors to identify individuals in current active matches or awaiting match.
- Contacting recently "expired" mentors to get feedback on the program and see if they are interested in being matched with another protégé.
- Articulating the benefits and expectations of both mentors and protégés on the SAA website.
- Promoting the mentor program and making calls to the membership for mentors
- Submitting a call to the Fellows listserv for mentors
- Collecting biographical and professional information from mentors and protégés that have allowed the subcommittee to make over 150 matches in the past year (December 2011-December 2012).
- Updating the database to keep track of matches and manage the mentoring program.
- Creation of a flyer on the Mentoring Program and distribution at the Annual Meeting of the New England Archivists

Additionally, on August 9, 2012 the subcommittee hosted the Mentoring Program Meet-and-Greet in the Networking Café at the Annual Meeting of SAA to allow mentors and protégées to meet one another in person.

Defining the Program and Other Substantive Tasks

The subcommittee met via conference call on October 31 to discuss the Committee's plans for the 2012/2013 year.

Immediate past chair, Lisa Carter, is working to develop better documentation of the committee's duties and procedures for future sub-committee leadership.

Co-chair, Alison Stankrauff is developing a survey to be distributed to recently "expired" mentors and protégés to collect feedback on the program.

Member, Michelle Gachette (liaison to the Diversity Committee) is researching the history of the program to better ascertain what does and doesn't work and how various constituencies have been involved in the program in the past. Please see attached report detailing the progress of this project.

Ongoing Issues/ Goals for the Upcoming Year

The Mentoring Program Subcommittee will continue the work of matching mentors with protégés and soliciting more mentors. In addition, the Subcommittee will continue to address recommended changes submitted by the Task force on Mentoring in 2009:

Further expand the SAA mentoring website to include additional online resources and links.

Develop training for mentors, including a possible joint workshop for mentors and protégés.

Add a checkbox to the SAA Membership Form to indicate interest in serving as a mentor - for both new SAA members and for renewing SAA members."

The subcommittee also hopes to engage in conversation with the Diversity and Awards Committees about the development of a mentor/ protégé component for award recipients. Lastly, we would like to ask the Council to consider making mentoring a strategic priority of SAA. In as much, we hope to better promote the program to our membership and get feedback from the membership as a whole on the program.

ATTACHMENT: Interim Report on Mentor Program

By Michelle Gachette

Impressions of the Program:

The New England Archivists (NEA) Diversity Task Force hosted a table at the fall meeting of NEA on Saturday, November 3rd, 2012. About 10 to 15 meeting attendees (a handful of them non-NEA members!) stopped by our table from about 10 am to 4:30pm. I had the newly created flyer (in color!) on our table promoting SAA's Mentoring Program and asked people for their impressions of the program.

Success: A fellow NEA board member came to me and said that Gregor Trinkaus-Randall had mentioned and promoted the SAA Mentoring Program in a session that the board member attended on archives management.

Room for improvement: I received the following questions and comments. It reflected the need for greater advocacy and marketing about mentoring in general, and SAA's program. I also got a lot of glazed looks as if to say "Who **me?**" I am sure this sounds very familiar to both of you as well.

- I already mentor. (I responded, but have you mentored in a formal program before like SAA?)
- Do you have to be a member to have a mentor (or to be a mentor)? (I responded "I don't know" (wink, wink) and forced the person to go to the web site and see for themselves the benefits of joining SAA overall, in addition to learning about the mentoring program--rather than get into the debate of the high membership costs for many)
- What am I supposed to do--What does an SAA mentor do? (I responded that its a commitment for one year, and what happens is determined by you and your match--how often you meet, where, and what the level of interaction is for both of you)
- People who were silent seemed to be holding back opinions and were polite, but I can sense that they wanted to know what was in it for them. (I responded that mentoring is a relationship that benefits both parties where each person is validated and supported)

Recommendations so far:

Based on what I have experienced so far, I would like to suggest the following:

1) That Mentoring in the Society of American Archivists becomes a **strategic priority**, and that all members are educated about the program, and are surveyed about their needs for mentoring and/or opportunity to serve as a mentor, at least once a year.

For example, upon joining or renewal of one's dues, perhaps members are asked through online registration or renewal,

- if they have heard about the program: if yes, choose among a list of options
- if they would be interested in finding out about the program

- if they have already served as protegee or mentor? when? and thanks
- how can institutional members participate as mentors? perhaps mentoring doesn't have to be between individuals only? Or, can there be targeted recruitment of staff who fall under institutional membership?

2) That the recommendations put forth by the mentoring task force in 2008 serve as the basis for organizing the goals and vision of this proposed strategic priority, and the recommendations assigned as measurable activities with a timeline.

3) That a survey be given annually and at the 6 month mark to protégés and mentors (In a separate email, I will submit feedback about the current survey Alison recently created.)

Research so far:

In my research so far, I discovered that shortly after the mentoring program was established in 1994, that the Task Force on Diversity in SAA was established (1996). I am eager to know if there is a connection at all between these two milestones. My attention right now is on what was the level of involvement of component groups (diverse roundtables, in particular) in the beginning, and how did that change over time? Ultimately, I want to know if one **can tie the issue of involvement from certain groups and the pool of mentors during certain periods of time in SAA's history? Or, maybe not? Could the level of involvement in the mentoring program be tied to the culture of SAA and reception to its diverse membership? Why are there so few mentors of color? Was this always the case? If not, how do we get them back? And, how can this historical information be used towards recruiting and retaining mentors universally?**

I will be focusing on just the first five years after the program started, as I mentioned during our conference call.

Lastly, I am casually looking at other programs for ideas:

The Academy of Certified Archivists waives your membership fee if you decide to mentor

The Society of Georgia Archivists Mentoring Program: <http://soga.org/involvement/mentoring>

The Association of Canadian Archivists: <http://archivists.ca/content/aca-mentorship-program>

Rare Books and Manuscripts Section of ACRL, a division of ALA:

http://www.rbms.info/committees/membership_and_professional/mentoring_program/index.shtml

ALA <http://www.ala.org/nmrt/oversightgroups/comm/mentor/mentoringcommittee>

Northwest Archivists: <http://weblib.lib.umt.edu/faculty/mccrea/NWAMentoring.htm>

