

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
January 25-27, 2011
Chicago, Illinois**

**Discussion: Annual Review of SAA's
Equal Opportunity/Non-Discrimination Policy
(Prepared by Nancy Beaumont)**

BACKGROUND

The SAA Council reviewed and revised SAA's Equal Opportunity / Non-Discrimination Policy in February 2009. In February 2010, as the Council discussed creation of a Statement on Diversity and reviewed the Strategic Priorities, the group revised the language in Strategic Priority #2: Diversity, Desired Outcome #4, Activity a. as follows (strikethrough = deletion, underline = addition):

Ensure that SAA's Equal Opportunity / Non-Discrimination Policy remains up to date and widely available to SAA members and the profession at large. (Ongoing)

- Conduct a an annual review of the Equal Opportunity / Non-Discrimination Policy ~~every three years~~ to ensure that it remains up to date. (Council, Staff; annual review at winter Council meeting)

(Note: Upon adoption of the SAA Statement on Diversity in August 2010, the Council noted that the Statement should be reviewed every three years in conjunction with the Equal Opportunity / Non-Discrimination Policy. The two documents will be presented for review together at the winter 2013 Council meeting. The Statement on Diversity is provided for reference in the Appendix.)

Following is SAA's current Equal Opportunity / Non-Discrimination Policy:

The Society of American Archivists is a professional organization established to serve the education and information needs of its members. SAA promotes cooperation, research, standards, public awareness, and relations with allied professions and thereby advances the identification, preservation, and use of records of enduring value. Because discrimination and unequal treatment are inimical to the Society's goals, SAA hereby declares that discrimination on the grounds of age, color, creed, disability, family relationship, gender identity/expression, individual life style, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status is prohibited within the Society. SAA will vigorously pursue a policy of non-discrimination and equal opportunity

through its programs, activities, services, operations, employment, and business contracts.

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

Do Council members wish to recommend any changes to SAA's current Equal Opportunity / Non-Discrimination Policy?

SAA Statement on Diversity (Adopted August 2010)

As a professional association that benefits from the participation of people from all backgrounds, the Society of American Archivists strives to ensure that its membership, the holdings that archivists acquire and manage, and the users whom archivists serve reflect the evolving diversity of society.

SAA understands *diversity* to encompass:

Socio-cultural factors. These factors relate to individual and community identity, and include the attributes mentioned in SAA's Equal Opportunity/Non-Discrimination Policy.

Professional and geographic factors. Concern about these factors reflects the Society's desire for broad participation from archivists working in various locations, repository types and sizes, and professional specializations.

By embracing diversity, the Society speaks more effectively on behalf of the entire profession, serves a fuller range of stakeholders, increases organizational credibility, and becomes a stronger advocate for the archives profession. SAA's initiatives are focused primarily on achieving socio-cultural diversity. This "living" document will be reviewed every three years in conjunction with the SAA Equal Opportunity / Non-Discrimination Policy.

Commentary:

Diversity is one of three high priorities identified in SAA's strategic plan. To guide and clarify our work in this area, the Council developed the "SAA Statement on Diversity." The Society of American Archivists has long promoted policies of nondiscrimination, identified diversity as a value for the association and the profession, and strived to foster a just and inclusive professional culture that reflects and embraces the diversity of the larger society. (For a review of SAA's many early actions, see Elizabeth Adkins's 2007 Presidential Address, "[Our Journey Toward Diversity—And a Call to \[More\] Action.](#)")

In 1992 SAA adopted an [Equal Opportunity/Non-Discrimination Policy](#) that is reviewed annually. But SAA recognizes that simply pledging nondiscrimination is insufficient, and that we must make positive efforts to develop diversity among our membership, our members' holdings, and our members' user communities in order to enrich the historical record and achieve professional excellence. In 2006 the SAA Council adopted "Strategic Priorities" that included the following issue statement as the basis for its strategic priority related to diversity:

The relevance of archives to society and the completeness of the documentary record hinge on the profession's success in ensuring that its members, the holdings that they collect and manage, and the users that they serve reflect the diversity of society as a whole.

The "[Strategic Priorities](#)" document, which guides SAA activities, is reviewed and updated annually to accommodate the evolving landscape of professional challenges.

SAA promotes diversity in all of its professional activities with an eye to ensuring effective representation of our members, addressing the concerns of the full range of stakeholders represented within our members' holdings, and reaching out to archivists' many communities of users.