Remarks of Executive Director Nancy Beaumont:
FY 2016 Year in Review

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It is my pleasure to provide a brief report of SAA’s activities in Fiscal Year 2016.

My remarks today, as well as those of Treasurer Cheryl Stadel-Bevans and incoming President Nance McGovern, will be posted next week on the Annual Meeting website, linked from the description for this membership meeting.

Once again I’m happy to report that the state of the association is very good!

SAA’s Strategic Plan, as well as the vision, mission, and core values statements, provide the foundation for the work we do at SAA.

Although our eyes are always on the four goals outlined in that Plan, the past year was very much focused on two key aspects of operations—both of which certainly support the goals. The first is that we replaced not one, not two, but four staff members. That’s a third of the staff! All four are Millennials and each is smart, creative, and enthusiastic. Turns out that what we’ve all been reading about “reverse-mentoring” has come true in the SAA office!

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The second major change feels almost like old news now: We implemented a completely redesigned website on March 29! Thanks to Matt the website is prettier and more easily navigated, but to my mind that’s not what is most important about the redesign. Although I’m generally very outcome-oriented (and I’m really pleased with the outcome), in this case it’s the process that I found most exciting. The process of touching virtually every piece of content on the site. Deciding where it most logically should be positioned. Creating a new menu structure. And throughout it all watching and benefiting from the dynamic of long-time staff working with brand new staff to refresh this critically important communication tool and public-facing image.

One major change of which I’m especially proud is the increased visibility for Advocacy, which encompasses public policy, public awareness, and promoting your archives within your own institution. On this web page you’ll find links to the good work of several SAA component groups as well as CoSA and the National Coalition for History. Please take a look when you can. And by the way: We’re very excited to be working with Kathleen Roe on a new series of Advocacy webinars premiering in October.
But about those Goals….

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**Goal 1: Advocating for Archives and Archivists**

To address Goal 1, Advocating for Archives and Archivists:

The **Committee on Public Policy** drafted for the Council’s approval:

- An issue brief on [Strengthening of Federal Records Authority](#)
- As well as a [Joint Statement on Access to State and Local Records](#), developed in partnership with CoSA and the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators through the organizations’ Joint Working Group on Issues and Awareness.

Last Monday, the Council approved a COPP-drafted [information brief](#) on archives and the environment, originally proposed by a group of archivists known as ProjectARCC.

In addition, our exuberantly active Intellectual Property Working Group drafted an issue brief on Archivists and the Term of Copyright as well as a helpful overview of Copyright Issues for Archivists that is linked from the online [Public Policy Agenda](#).

In consultation with COPP or IPWG, and often in collaboration with other component or external groups, SAA once again issued a lot of [statements](#) during the year, including comments to:

- The US Copyright Office on “Copyright Protection for Certain Visual Works”; the office’s Mass Digitization Pilot Program; Section 1201 of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act; and draft revision of Section 108.

- To Facebook on enabling content downloading for pages.

- SAA signed on to an amicus brief, filed by the Internet Archive, in the case of Fox News Network v TVEyes, Inc., on the matter of fair use.

- And at the request of COPP, we sent a letter to the executive director of the Port of Los Angeles expressing our concern about the Port’s decision to close its archives and end its preservation program.

We continued to work with the [National Coalition for History](#) to increase participation in the Congressional History Caucus, which now comprises 26 members of Congress.

And we asked members to contact the Senate to urge confirmation of Dr. Carla Hayden as Librarian of Congress, the first woman and the first African-American to hold the position. She was confirmed on July 13.
The Committee on Public Awareness:

- Promoted our second annual #AskAnArchivist Day on October 1 – an initiative that resulted in more than 7,500 tweets from more 2,800 unique posters. We invite you to participate in this year’s #AskAnArchivist Day on October 3 – the first work day in October which is, of course, American Archives Month.

- In January COPA launched a new blog—ArchivesAWARE!—that was established to create an online space for sharing of experiences and ideas for raising public awareness of archives and the value that archives and archivists add to business, government, education, and society as a whole. I encourage you to browse the blog for some great, practical ideas – and to contribute your own ideas, successes, and lessons learned.

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Goal 2: Enhancing Professional Growth

Under Goal 2, Enhancing Professional Growth:

- Nearly 2000 attendees participated in SAA’s 99 face-to-face workshops and 8 webinars in FY 16. The Digital Archives Specialist curriculum and certificate program remained our bread-and-butter professional development offering, with more than 1,000 individuals engaged in one or more courses, 600 pursuing the DAS certificate, and 265 individuals who have been awarded a certificate. New in March is the Arrangement and Description Certificate Program, for which the Committee on Education and staff have already completed development of four live courses and four webinars, with more in the works. Eighty-six individuals already have attended an A&D course, of whom 62 chose to take the exams – a good indicator of participation levels to come.

- As I’ve reported for the past few years, book sales continue to decline, despite our move to electronic publications in response to members’ requests. We still sell a lot more hard-copy books than e-pubs, but will continue to experiment to arrive at a successful distribution model.

We’re nearing a critical mass of titles within the Trends in Archives Practice Series, with very positive feedback at this conference on the newly issued modules on Teaching with Primary Sources and Digital Preservation Essentials. There are now 13 modules in the Trends series, with six more in the works on Appraisal and Acquisition Strategies and Putting Descriptive Standards to Work.

And we have contracts in hand for five new books in the Archival Fundamentals Series, the first volumes of which will be available in late 2017.
Goal 3: Advancing the Field

Goal 3 is about Advancing the Field. To that end:

- **We launched a new website for *The American Archivist***. The transition to a new publishing platform for the journal is in its final phase, which is installation of PeerTrack, a system that unifies the submission, tracking, and review of manuscripts. PeerTrack will enable us to streamline the process of working with authors at every stage. I was interested, by the way, to see that Journal stats indicate that Greene and Meissner’s “More Product, Less Process” from the Fall/Winter 2005 issue is still the most-accessed abstract in our Journal’s modern history.

- **Word of the Week**, an initiative by the Dictionary Working Group to engage members in collaborative development of the Dictionary, now has more than 1,200 subscribers (up 20% from this time last year). We launched new collaboration software in February that will help the working group streamline its work.

- And here in Atlanta on Tuesday we celebrated the 10th Anniversary of SAA’s thriving Research Forum, the brainchild of Nance McGovern and SAA Past President Helen Tibbo.

Goal 4: Meeting Members’ Needs

Like the other three goals, Goal 4 is daunting. This one is all about meeting member needs.

4.1. Facilitate effective communication with and among members.

I’ve already mentioned the work done to launch our new website. Those of you who’ve done it know that there will always be work to be done on content and navigation, but Matt’s focus right now is on converting the MemberMax pages (membership renewals, rosters, the bookstore, and the education calendar) to the new design. We’re exerting extra caution with these pages, as they focus on transactions with members. We should see the new design across all these pages within the next two months, including making these pages mobile-friendly.

**Another way in which we have facilitated more effective communication with and among members is through increased use of social media.** Thanks to Abigail Christian’s savvy, SAA now has more than 10,000 Facebook likes (compared with 7,600 last year) and 10,600 Twitter followers (up from 8,550). And last month Abigail restarted our Instagram account and invited archivists in the Atlanta area to manage it—and post stuff—for a week at a time. We’re excited about the level of participation already and hope to increase use of this tool.
If you’d like to know more about what SAA is doing and what the Council is discussing, I encourage you to open In The Loop when you receive it in your inbox every other week, scan the home page once or twice a week, check SAA’s Facebook and Twitter feeds, and take a look at the Council meeting materials when we point you to them two weeks before every Council meeting. They’re all posted online under About SAA / Governance and are announced via the home page, FB, and Twitter.

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4.2. Create opportunities for members to participate fully in the association.

We’re constantly on the lookout for opportunities for members to participate more fully in the association. I’ll mention two of them. The first was accomplished easily: we set up a student chapter leader discussion list so that chapter leaders could talk to each other more than once a year at this conference.

The second was a bit more challenging, and that was arriving at a practical, workable, and respectful set of changes to SAA’s current structure for interest groups. Thanks to the Council Working Group for proposing a set of changes and to many members for commenting on them, we now have a way forward that balances resource needs with member and nonmember access to these important groups (currently known as sections and roundtables and soon to be known simply as “sections”). Stay tuned for details as they’re rolled out.

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4.3 Continue to enrich the association and the profession with greater diversity in membership and leadership.

Nance will provide more detail about plans for enriching SAA and the profession with greater diversity in membership and leadership, so I will simply point to her concerted effort to ensure that the 100+ appointments that she made this year reflected – to the greatest extent possible – our awareness of the need to become a more inclusive organization. In addition, thanks to the efforts of Diversity Committee Chair Tywanna Whorley and staff member Felicia Owens, we were also able to implement a more systematic and widespread placement of interns with component groups, with an emphasis on students and new professionals who are members of traditionally underrepresented groups.

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And now a few more highlights from Fiscal Year 2016:

- **Membership hovered near 6,100 throughout the year**, and we ended the year with 100 fewer members than in June 2015. But there is good news: More than 70 members already have transferred to the newly created ID8 category and institutional membership has remained stable. There is no doubt, though, that membership is leveling off—and that the dues increase approved by the membership in November and implemented this July was the right thing to do.
You’ve heard quite a bit more about the SAA Foundation in the past year, with awarding of the Foundation’s first grant through the new grant application process and an effective annual appeal and Day of Giving focused on replenishing the Mosaic Scholarship Fund – which now has a balance of more than $30,000. Perhaps the best news of all is that a record of 364 donors contributed to the Foundation in FY16.

The 2015 Annual Meeting in Cleveland brought in more than 1,700 attendees who enjoyed meeting in a convention center for the first time and had a blast at the fabulous Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum. Beyond providing outstanding programming and networking opportunities, the conference yielded a net gain that made FY16 a very positive year for SAA. As Cheryl will tell you, we have our minds and hearts set on investing the net gain in a new association management software system that will yield so many benefits to the organization….

And, of course, we spent a good amount of time in FY16 preparing for this conference. Paid registration for this meeting was 1,645, a bit shy of budget but still a very respectable number. I hope that you will complete the online evaluation form so that we can respond to your preferences. Development of the 2017 Annual Meeting in Portland has begun – and it will be a very cool meeting in a very cool place. We hope to see you there!

And now for some “thank-you”s….

Both members and staff have truly benefited during the past three years from the leadership demonstrated by the individuals who are retiring from the Council today.

Lisa Mangiafico: Finally – someone on the Council who works for a professional association and can vouch for their complexities (and eccentricities)! Lisa spent a good part of her tenure right in the midst of some very tough assignments – including revising the Council Handbook and working on various iterations of the member affinity group proposals. Well, that’s what you get for being an expert on parliamentary procedure, being so well organized, and being such a good thinker….

Tim Pyatt: The dean in our midst. The good shepherd. Able to remember not just all the names of the Standards Committee’s technical subcommittees, but also their charges. Tim never met a consent agenda item that he could live with nor a plaid shirt on sale that he could pass up. He brought great wisdom to the Council and also a wonderful sense of humor.

Helen Wong Smith: Helen is the epitome of grace and graciousness. She guided us gently but firmly as the Council and staff took on cultural competence and so many other challenging topics. We look forward to continuing that work with Helen’s involvement in the years ahead.
**Dennis Meissner:** And Dennis. A certain Zen sensibility, indeed. He’s laid out some exciting ideas for inclusion, research and evaluation, and the SAA Foundation on which I, for one, can’t wait to get started! With his ongoing involvement, of course.

Just as SAA could not have achieved what it has as an organization in the past year without this leadership, neither could it have thrived quite so well without our very talented and dedicated staff: Matt Black, Teresa Brinati, Mia Capodilupo, Peter Carlson, Abigail Christian, Solveig De Sutter, Brianne Downing, Lee Gonzalez, Felicia Owens, Carlos Salgado, and Michael Santiago.

I’d also like to thank our amazing Conference & Logistics Consultants team – Paul Henning, Allison Perrelli, Stacey Ogren, and new addition Richard Hays – for their excellent work, and for making it seem like there are a lot more staff at the conference than there are….

And thanks to all of you for your membership, your good ideas, and the many volunteer hours that you commit to SAA. It’s my pleasure to work with you.