

NFACE Project Overview: Purpose, Goals, and Activities

The Council of State Historical Records Coordinators (COSHRC), in partnership with the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), undertook a project to organize and present a National Forum on Archival Continuing Education (NFACE). COSHRC and AASLH received funds from the National Historical Publications and Records

Commission (NHPRC) in November 1998 to support planning for this Forum. The NFACE Program Committee first met in April 1999 to discuss the specific project components, work plan, participants, agenda, and expected outcomes. COSHRC and AASLH were awarded additional funds from NHPRC to cover the expenses of presenting the Forum.

What was NFACE?

The National Forum on Archival Continuing Education (NFACE), held April 27-29, 2000, in Decatur, Georgia, was a response to a profession-wide call for attention to continuing education. The Forum's 120 participants included representatives from more than 45 organizations that currently provide continuing education to those caring for historical records or whose constituents are potential consumers of such services. Forty-three State Coordinators were among the participants.

The goals of the Forum were to:

Inform the organizations about what educational services and information resources were already available;

Encourage collaboration and coordination among providers in developing offerings that addressed gaps in existing educational opportunities;

Improve accessibility to information resources about best practices in the care of historical records that support these educational efforts; and

Develop an action agenda for archival continuing education in the next decade. This agenda will be shared with federal funding agencies, resource allocators, and key stakeholders in archival continuing education.

Who are the nation's recordkeepers?

The NFACE project was concerned with the continuing educational and informational needs of all individuals who care for historical records. The 1998 COSHRC report, "Where History Begins," which analyzed a survey of historical records repositories in the U.S., found records in the care of three broad categories of individuals:

Professional archivists and manuscript curators.

Professional recordkeepers work in a variety of repositories, including college and university archives and special collections departments, historical societies, state and local government archives, federal repositories like the National Archives and Library of Congress, research libraries and other cultural institutions, and corporate archives serving businesses and religious organizations, among others.

What happened at the Forum?

The two-day event included the following components:

Common Ground Session during which the characteristics and needs of those who care for historical records were described;

Information Sessions focusing on the types of audiences and their needs, best practices, adult learning theory, and new methods for delivering continuing education;

Incubator Sessions to bring together potential partners in collaborative efforts and facilitate discussion to assist in developing projects or cooperative efforts;

Critique and assessment sessions to provide ideas and input for the development of an action agenda for archival continuing education in the next decade;

An Information Fair-Share exhibit area for participating organizations to share information about their educational programs and display publications and curricular materials; and

A video viewing area to acquaint participants with educational videos and public service announcements developed by participating organizations.

Allied professionals with records responsibilities. These include state and local government officials, museum curators, librarians, historic site administrators, and others whose primary training and expertise is in another field but whose work involves some significant records-related responsibilities.

Records caretakers who have limited or no training. Many organizations, including local historical societies and other community-based organizations, depend heavily on volunteers, student interns, or paraprofessionals to provide vital care for their historical collections.

Participants in the conference discussed the varying needs and optimum delivery methods for each of these groups and agreed that it was important to develop programs for all three.

Who organized NFACE?

The Forum project was organized by the NFACE Program Committee chaired by Kathleen Roe (New York State Archives and Records Administration). Terry Davis (AASLH Executive Director) was the Administrative/Financial Director for the project. Guy Louis Rocha (COSHRHC chair) was the Project Director. Edward Weldon (Georgia Department of Archives and History) served as Local Arrangements Chair. Diane Strock-Lynskey served as the project's strategic planning consultant.

Critical to the success of the conference were the many individuals who served as presenters during the Information Sessions, facilitators and recorders for the Incubator Sessions, and local arrangements hosts. The many individuals who did not attend the conference but participated in pre-conference focus groups or responded to the project's surveys also played an essential role.

Other members of the Program Committee included:

Charles Arp, Ohio Historical Society
Danna Bell-Russel, Library of Congress
Richard Cameron, National Historical Publications and Records Commission
Sandra Clark, Michigan Historical Center
Nancy L.P. Fortna, National Archives and Records Administration
Jeffrey Johnson, Utah State Archives
Maureen Melton, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
Patricia Michaelis, Kansas State Historical Society
Rosalye Settles, Curator's Office, Architect of the Capitol
Victoria Irons Walch, Project Coordinator
Jennifer Burlis-Freilich, Research Consultant
Elizabeth Barr, Local Arrangements Coordinator
Natalie Norris, AASLH Meeting Planner

Who participated in the Forum?

The participants represented more than 45 national and regional organizations, as well as 43 state-level bodies that currently provide continuing education to those caring for historical records or whose constituents are potential consumers of such services. NFACE also invited representatives from many agencies that provide funding for archival continuing education or that sponsor such programs.

The participants represented the following broad categories:

Providers of continuing archival education, including national archival associations, regional archival associations (especially those serving multi-state regions), State Historical Records Advisory Boards, state archives and historical societies, archival institutes (Georgia, Western, National Archives, New England);

Allied professional associations providing continuing education that includes archival topics. These associations serve librarians, museum professionals, and records managers, among others; and

Agencies providing funding for archival continuing education.

Organizations Represented at NFACE

National archival associations

Academy of Certified Archivists (ACA)
Council of State Historical Records Coordinators (COSHRHC)
National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (NAGARA)
Society of American Archivists (SAA), including the following subdivisions:
Archivists of Color Roundtable, Committee on Education and Professional Development, Archivists of Religious Collections Section, Archival Educators Roundtable
Native American/ethnic archival/historical records groups (represented by the Five States Project)

Regional archival associations

Conference of Inter-Mountain Archivists (CIMA)
Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC)
Midwest Archives Conference (MAC)
New England Archivists (NEA)
Northwest Archivists, Inc. (NWA)
Society of California Archivists (SCA) / Western Archives Institute
Society of Georgia Archivists (SGA) / Georgia Archives Institute
Society of Southwest Archivists (SSA)

Allied professional associations

American Association for State and Local History (AASLH)
American Association of Museums (AAM)
American Library Association (ALA), including the following subdivisions:
Association of College and Research Libraries, Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS), Reference & User Services Association, History Section
Association for Documentary Editing (ADE)
Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA)
Association of Records Managers and Administrators
Genealogical Society of Utah
Museum Computer Network (MCN)
Regional museum organizations (represented by the Southeastern Museum Conference)
Special Libraries Association (SLA)
State Historic Administrators

State Historical Preservation Officers (SHPOs)
State Library Continuing Education Coordinators
Visual Resources Association (VRA)

Preservation and conservation organizations

American Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works
Amigos Library Services
Northeast Document Conservation Center (NEDCC)
Southeastern Library Network (SOLINET)

Federal agencies

Library of Congress (LC)
National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)
National Park Service (NPS)
Smithsonian Institution

Funding organizations

Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)
National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC)

State Historical Records Coordinators representing their State Historical Records Advisory Boards in the following states and territories:

Alabama	Maine	Ohio
Alaska	Massachusetts	Pennsylvania
American Samoa	Michigan	Rhode Island
Arizona	Minnesota	South Carolina
California	Mississippi	Tennessee
Delaware	Missouri	Texas
Florida	Montana	Utah
Georgia	Nebraska	Vermont
Hawaii	Nevada	Virginia
Idaho	New Hampshire	Washington
Illinois	New Jersey	West Virginia
Indiana	New Mexico	Wisconsin
Iowa	New York	Wyoming
Kansas	North Carolina	
Kentucky	North Dakota	

What was NFACE trying to accomplish?

We wanted the Forum to facilitate the creation of a common vision and plan for continuing archival education nationwide. By bringing the core group of providers of archival education together for the first time, we hoped that it would be possible to initiate assessment, information-sharing, collaborations, and commitments across organizational lines. We believed that the resulting collaborations and cooperation could begin to bring some consistency, order, and comprehensiveness to archival education.

We realize that one conference cannot address all issues, solve all problems, or involve all potential stakeholders and constituents. However, we believe that NFACE has helped make progress toward improving educational opportunities for recordkeepers of all kinds and, ultimately, improve the care and availability of our nation's historical resources. NFACE continues to have an impact, as reflected in the activities described on page 6 of this report.

What was done to prepare for the Forum?

Directory of Continuing Education Programs

In the months leading up to the Forum, the NFACE staff and Program Committee undertook an in-depth data gathering and evaluation process. We contacted national and regional professional associations, state and federal agencies, individual repositories, and many other organizations inside and outside the archival field.

We sought their involvement in the NFACE project and also solicited information about their continuing education programs. This information was used to compile a master directory of workshops, institutes, on-the-job programs, correspondence courses, and other educational opportunities offered during 1999 and early 2000.

In all, we received information from 99 education providers who were responsible for delivering more than 500 separate continuing education programs during this time period.

The providers included:

Professional associations (national, regional, and state-based) serving archivists and allied professionals (librarians, museum professionals, records managers, librarians, etc.);

Archival repositories that not only provide training to their own staff but offer training to other professionals or community volunteers;

Colleges and universities that offer continuing education to professionals or nonprofessionals beyond those graduate programs leading to an advanced degree;

Government agencies (federal, state, or local); and

For-profit enterprises that provide training for a fee.

While the resulting directory was by no means a comprehensive list, it did provide an understanding of the wide variety of programs and providers then attempting to deliver continuing education to archivists and others who care for historical records.

Analyzed in conjunction with the data collected during the NFACE Survey of Individual Continuing Education and Information Needs, the directory helped participants determine where the greatest gaps between perceived needs and available training were. It also made providers aware of potential collaborative opportunities with other organizations trying to deliver similar services. Finally, it provided a snapshot of existing practices which can help the archival community assess progress in the future.

Survey of Individual Continuing Education and Information Needs

To assess the continuing education needs of individuals, NFACE distributed a two-page survey at national and regional archival conferences, through State Historical Records Advisory Boards, in newsletters, and online through the COSHRC website. We actively sought responses from all three categories of historical recordkeepers: professional archivists, allied professionals, and caretakers with limited or no training.

More than 2,000 individual practitioners made their needs known by responding to this survey. Across the board, their strongest interests lay in basic archival methods, uses of technology, storage and environmental standards, and preservation. Professional archivists and records managers also underscored their need for additional education in electronic records management, appraisal, and description of records.

When asked who they turn to for assistance, the overwhelming response was "colleagues." Archivists and librarians also rely on their professional associations. State agencies are important to librarians as well as nonprofessionals who work in historical societies and other community-based organizations.

All categories of respondents agreed that "local" was better. They said they would be much more likely to attend training in their own city or state than elsewhere. Archivists and records managers, especially those working in university or government settings, appeared somewhat more willing to travel a distance for educational programs or conferences. Cost, of course, was also a significant factor in determining whether to attend a program or not.

Focus Groups

Twenty-three states and the New England Archivists held a total of 36 focus groups during the second half of 1999. While the average size was 12 people in a 1½ hour discussion, they varied from 5 attendees at a half-hour meeting to 60 participants in an all-day conference. Facilitators asked participants to reflect on their greatest needs for education and information services, indicate where they go for assistance, describe how existing resources could be enhanced, and relate their best and worst training experiences. In all, more than 600 people participated in these focus groups.

Detailed reports on the surveys and focus groups are available on the COSHRC website at www.coshrc.org/reports/nface/.

Core Components of Archival Continuing Education

The NFACE Core Components were developed to provide a framework for analyzing current and future archival continuing education. They help define just what functions, activities, or topics constitute the knowledge base for this type of archival education.

The NFACE Program Committee used the core components to identify gaps, overlaps, and areas of particular concern in archival continuing education. That information led to the identification of topics for the Information and the Incubator Sessions. We believe these components provide a useful structure for analysis and consideration of archival continuing education needs and issues. This list is not intended to be a final, comprehensive statement, but a practical organizing tool that may assist further assessment and analysis of the core components of archival continuing education.

The list of core components was derived from several excellent resources, including:

The Society of American Archivists' *Guidelines for the Development of Post-Appointment and Continuing Education and Training (PACE) Programs*, and other documents developed by SAA's Committee on Education and Professional Development (www.archivists.org/prof-education/pace.asp)

The Academy of Certified Archivists' *Role Delineation* document which defines the knowledge and skills necessary for archival work (www.certifiedarchivists.org/html/RoleDelineation.html)

The National Park Service's *Essential Competencies: Museum Management Archivist Track*, which defines the competencies, knowledge, skills and abilities needed to perform in this discipline (www.nps.gov/training/npsonly/RSC/archivist.htm#1)

Data gathered from the NFACE surveys and focus groups also informed the development of this document.

Records management

- Basic elements of records management
- Recordkeeping systems
- Retention and disposition
- Information technologies (microfilm, computer, etc.)
- Files management
- Life cycle of records

Basic elements of archival programs

- Starting an archival program
- Introduction to core elements (identified as general categories below)

Identification and retention of records

- Appraisal
- Collection evaluation
- Documentation planning
- Donor relations
- Acquisition
- Accessioning
- Deaccessioning
- Archival surveys
- Legal transfer/acquisition

Arrangement and description

- Arrangement
- Description
- Descriptive standards for data structure (e.g., MARC, EAD)
- Descriptive standards for data content (e.g., APPM)
- Descriptive standards for data values (e.g., LCSH, AAT)
- Archival authority information
- Subject access/indexing
- Automated access
- Dealing with special formats
- Creation of access tools (finding aids, guides)

Reference

- Customer se/vice issues for internal and external customers
- Security
- Copyright
- Administration of access: privacy, confidentiality, FOI
- Usage documentation
- User education

Outreach

- Public relations
- Exhibits
- Educational uses of archives (especially classroom)
- Using archival materials for public relations

Electronic records

- Management of electronic records
- Preservation of electronic records
- Information policy

Preservation

- Collection storage (environmental issues, pests, vermin)
- Disaster planning
- Recovery (after disasters)
- Reformatting (microfilm, digitization, standards)
- Care of materials (various formats)
- Handling techniques
- Conservation treatments
- Preservation administration

Program Management

- Fundraising
- Grants management
- Financial management
- Program planning and organizational management
- Strategic planning
- Management of buildings, facilities, equipment
- Advocacy
- Project management

Managing people

- Human resources management
- Supervision
- Managing volunteer programs
- Leadership skills

Professional knowledge

- Professional ethics
- History of archives, archival organizations
- History of archival legislation

Research

- Research methods in archival practice and theory
- Research in subject fields: tools and methods for American history, cultural or natural history research

Technology applications

(there are many overlaps between functional area skills and technology)

- Developing websites for access
- Web exhibits
- Applying technology to manage archival business practices

Action Agenda for Archival Continuing Education

1. Create a nationwide clearinghouse of information to support the development, delivery, and accessibility of archival continuing education.
2. Pursue partnerships, collaboration and regular communication among professional archival organizations and with organizations serving allied professions.
3. Create a diverse and well-educated next generation of archival leadership.
4. Improve the quality and accessibility of archival continuing education and information resources for grassroots organizations and the volunteers who work to collect and preserve historical records in community-based organizations.
5. Improve the quality and accessibility of archival continuing education and information resources for individuals from diverse communities or who work with records documenting diversity.
6. Improve the quality and accessibility of archival continuing education and information resources for allied professionals, including public librarians and museum curators, who bear responsibility for historical records as an adjunct to their primary duties.
7. Improve the quality and availability of archival continuing education by
 - incorporating effective adult learning methods,
 - leveraging appropriate technologies, and
 - exploring non-traditional approaches to delivery.
8. Provide a firm foundation for ongoing assessment and analysis of archival continuing education needs by initiating research and evaluation of existing survey data and ensuring the collection of data to support longitudinal analysis.
9. Develop collaborative approaches to providing archival continuing education on specific topics or issues for which limited or no educational opportunities currently exist.
10. Broaden the base and depth of electronic records training by developing collaborative projects in support of the existing NHPRC initiative on electronic records.
11. Develop collaborative approaches to providing archival continuing education in specific geographic regions particularly west of the Mississippi, in which individuals and repositories are located at great distances from each other and from potential sources of education and assistance.
12. Identify sources for both short-term and sustainable funding for collaborative archival education initiatives.

What are our next steps?

More than one NFACE participant said that the two most important outcomes of the conference were the spirit of cooperation that it kindled and the channels of communication that it opened. Here are some suggestions for helping further the goals of NFACE as we all work to improve continuing education and information resources for historical recordkeepers:

Archival Associations (national, regional, state, local)

Work with other organizations to facilitate sharing of programs, initiatives, and resources. See www.coshrc.org/cooperation/ for more information on how to make these connections.

Look for ways to move forward on NFACE Action Agenda items to improve continuing education for your members.

Monitor the review of SAA's guidelines for continuing education programs (www.archivists.org/prof-education/pace.asp).

State Historical Records Advisory Boards (SHRABs)

Use the "Basics of Archives" workshop (see page 6) to provide continuing education to grassroots organizations.

Work with regional, state, and local archival associations in your area to develop joint programs.

Stay connected with SHRABs in other states through the COSHRC website at www.coshrc.org/shrabs/.

Allied Professional Associations

Work with national and regional archival associations and SHRABs to bring continuing education on archival methods and procedures to your members.

Be sure your website links to others. This will provide access to archival resources your constituents can use and make your educational offerings more widely known to the archival community.

Individuals Working in the Archival Field

Make your needs known to your regional and national associations.

Contact your state historical records coordinator for information on NHPRC grants and other resources that support continuing education. You can find their names and addresses at www.coshrc.org/admin/members.htm.

Use your association and SHRAB websites to look for assistance, including links to other training and educational resources (if no links exist, ask why).

Copies of this report and related materials are available on the COSHRC website at www.coshrc.org/reports/nface/ or by writing to COSHRC, PO Box 1771, Dover DE 19903.

Comments are welcome and should be directed to Vicki Walch, COSHRC Project Coordinator, vwalch@coshrc.org or 319-338-6650.

The NFACE Final Report was printed with funds from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

NFACE Follow-Up Initiatives and Projects

Highlighted here are national programs as well as some focused on the needs of particular audiences. They all have taken root from the connections made at NFACE.

“Basics of Archives” Online and On-site Workshops

The “Basics of Archives” project addresses items 4 through 7 of the NFACE Action Agenda. It is a collaborative two-year grant project funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) in 2002. The project’s goal is to improve the management of and access to our nation’s historical records by providing effective, practical continuing education for individuals in museums, libraries, historical societies, and other related organizations who are responsible for archival and manuscript materials. The project addresses the lack of a standardized, core education for the keepers of our nation’s historical records who are not professional archivists.

The participants—the American Association for State and Local History, Michigan Historical Center, New York State Archives, and Ohio Historical Society—are developing a comprehensive, self-paced, interactive “Basic Archival Continuing Education Curriculum” (BACEC) for online and traditional on-site workshop delivery. These BACEC materials will guide non-archivists to do archival work at an appropriate level of competence and practice. An adult education expert will work with the curriculum developers to focus on meeting the needs of adult learners. For additional information, contact Project Directors Kathleen Roe (kroe@mail.nysed.gov) or Charlie Arp (carp@ohiohistory.org).

Tribal Archives Initiatives

Several projects in the last two years have addressed NFACE Action Agenda item 5 in reaching out to Native American communities.

In March 2000, the Nebraska State Historical Society coordinated a two-day meeting in Omaha at which Native American professionals involved with **tribal preservation issues** explored needs and opportunities for the preservation and conservation of their cultural heritage. This project was funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

The **First Archivists Circle**, a new organization of tribal archivists, held its first formal meeting in Phoenix AZ in January 2002. This and a subsequent meeting are supported by an NHPRC grant to the Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records. “The First Archivists Circle provides leadership and support for the preservation and culturally sensitive use of documentary materials sustaining the heritage of indigenous peoples.” The goals of the organization include training and professional development, advising the NHPRC and other funding agencies, promoting professional archival practices and standards in tribal communities, outreach and recruiting, networking and collaboration.

The Western Archives Institute is coordinating the **Native American/Tribal Archivists Curriculum Project** to develop a curriculum and a class schedule for a Special Institute for Native American and Tribal Archivists, to be held in August 2003.

Information about these and other NFACE-based projects can be found at www.coshrc.org/nface/. We would welcome news about your projects!
Send information to Vicki Walch, vwalch@coshrc.org.

Archival Education and Information Web Needs Assessment Project

The Web Needs Assessment Project, 2001-02, focused on the first two items of the NFACE Action Agenda. The project evaluated the need for and viability of an Internet-based clearinghouse for historical recordkeepers. It concluded that U.S. archival associations need to develop better channels of communication and a deeper understanding of each others’ programs and priorities before any substantial collaborative project is possible.

The project’s report, “Connecting the Archival Community” (July 2002) identifies a number of valuable Web-based resources not widely enough known or used within the archival community. It also highlights several initiatives to provide online continuing education or innovative information delivery vehicles. By raising awareness of existing resources, it is hoped the report will boost development of additional tools through cooperative efforts.

The report recommends several ways to encourage communication and resource-sharing among organizations. These include creating an Archival Association Roundtable within SAA, starting a listserv for leaders of the 61 professional associations now serving archivists in the U.S., and compiling an archival association directory.

Another recommendation builds on an NFACE priority to develop a Web-based calendar of archival education programs. The report describes the features of such a calendar, provides cost estimates for programming and maintenance, and suggests that the national and regional archival associations along with the SHRABs work together to create and sustain such a calendar.

The Web Needs Assessment Project’s final report and related materials are available on the COSHRC website at www.coshrc.org/reports/. The project was sponsored by COSHRC in cooperation with AASLH, and was funded by NHPRC. Additional information is available from Vicki Walch, COSHRC Project Coordinator, vwalch@coshrc.org.

Other initiatives that respond to items in the NFACE Action Agenda, 2000 to 2002:

The **Western Archives Institute** (WAI) was held for the first time outside of California in fall 2001 when it met in Salt Lake City. WAI is planning future institutes in other western states. (NFACE Action Agenda item 11)

The Minnesota Historical Society, Ohio Historical Society, Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives, Indiana University, and San Diego Supercomputer Center are working to develop **curricula for workshops on metadata and XML** for archivists and their constituencies, www.mnhs.org/preserve/records/edarchivists.html. (NFACE Action Agenda item 10)

The Kansas State Historical Records Advisory Board received NHPRC grant funds for an **experimental mentoring program** modeled after a program developed by the Wisconsin SHRAB, www.kshs.org/kshrab/about.htm. (NFACE Action Agenda item 4)

Bruce Dearstyne, College of Information Studies, University of Maryland-College Park, organized a **Leadership Institute for Administrators of State Archives, Records Management and Information Management Programs** in May 2002, www.clis.umd.edu/news_events/02sprLeadership.html. (NFACE Action Agenda item 3)