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TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Kathleen Rainwater, Chair
DATE: 1 May 2007
RE: Scholarship Committee Annual Report 2006-2007

Committee Members:

Chair	Kathleen Rainwater (2004-2007)
Committee Members	Tatum Preston (2006-2008) Beth Transue (2006-2009)
Board Liaison	Rebecca Vargha
Staff Committee Member	Tenikka Greene

The Scholarship Committee was asked to review our committee charge this year and we found the existing committee charge to be acceptable.

The Scholarship Committee Community of Practice (CoP) continues to work very well for committee members. We expanded the function of the CoP to include the posting of all of the application documents submitted by the applicants. This eliminated the need for SLA staff to make five copies of every document for distribution.

The committee continued to use the CoP to post our top choices for each scholarship prior to our selection meeting. This process enables each member of the committee to review the choices of other committee members, and re-evaluate their own top choices.

For the first time, scholarship applicants were able to submit their applications online, via the SLA website. Sixty-four percent of the applicants choose to apply electronically; this is a significant increase over last year due to the ease of submission.

As in any new process, we found a few glitches. An evaluation of the incomplete applications indicated that the instructions needed to be more transparent and perhaps included in the scholarship description. The committee will discuss this further in June and recommend some changes to the SLA web development team. In addition, we are told that a new system may be able to require that all of the required documents are submitted before the application itself will be accepted.

The committee has some concern that the current application timeline does not allow the scholarship recipients enough time to apply for conference stipends after they are notified that they have received a scholarship. Additionally, since the chapter governance year has changed, the transition of committee chair is now officially scheduled for January. Since January is in the middle of the scholarship selection process, it is not the best time for the transition of the scholarship committee leadership if we remain on the current schedule.

The committee discussed the possibility of moving up the scholarship process significantly enough that the scholarships would be chosen by the end of the year, and the committee's duties completed by the end of December in order to allow the transition of chairs and committee members to take place in January in accordance to the association governing year. Recipients would have plenty of time to apply for conference attendance stipends. The duties of the committee would be completed by the end of the year. The committee chair could submit a committee report at the beginning of January before stepping down.

The committee would like to revise the application process as follows:
(Proposed dates highlighted in parenthesis.)

Proposed changes to Scholarship Timetable

Approximate Date Activity

(January) October Board of Directors approves number and amount of scholarships in annual budget process.

(September 30th) October Deadline for receipt of scholarship applications at headquarters. A brief letter of acknowledgment is sent upon receipt of the application by headquarters.

(October) November Letters requesting interviews and pertinent scholarship documents sent to Chapter Presidents. Interview forms and instructions are also sent.

January (November) Deadline for receipt of interviews from Chapter Presidents. Interview form should be sent directly to Committee Chair.

December (November) Completed scholarship packets sent to post to the CoP for Committee Chair and members to review.

March (December) Committee conducts conference call to discuss applicants and select winners and alternates. Notification is sent to headquarters immediately thereafter.

April (December) Headquarters notifies winners, alternates and non-winners.

Summer (First quarter of the year) News release and announcements of scholarships to Chapters, library press, and library schools sent by headquarters. Some announcements should also be sent to Chair.

May (January) Annual Report of Committee should be sent to headquarters before the transition of committee chair, by the date set by the CEO.

June Announcement of the winners is made by the Chair at the Annual Meeting and by the President at the Awards Banquet. Additional publicity about winners sent to newspapers and journals by headquarters.

Due to the change in governance year, and the proposed changes to the scholarship timetable, all of the current committee members would also serve during an additional scholarship application process this year. We will take advantage of this opportunity to discuss the application process further when we meet in June. The committee plans to address changes to the Scholarship page on the SLA website; set firm dates for the new application process schedule; and address the issue of changing the name of the Affirmative action scholarship at our meeting in June, 2007.

Scholarship Selection

As always, the selection of the scholarship recipients was a challenge. We received 139 applications for review. All of the selected applicants have accepted their scholarships. We hope to see several of them at the conference in June and at the awards reception.

2006/2007 SLA Scholarship Recipients

Julie May earned a B.A. in English Literature from Indiana University and an A.A.S. in Applied Photography from Rochester Institute of Technology. She is a part-time student, working on her information and library studies degree at Pratt University, with a focus on cultural informatics and archives. She joined the Pratt student chapter of SLA and recently redesigned their website. In addition to her studies, Ms May also works at the Brooklyn Historical Society as a photo archivist. During an internship with Pentagram Design, she organized their reference library from a designer's perspective. She "hope[s] to mesh [her] interests in art and photography with the informational and access issues that special libraries face with their collections." The Scholarship Committee selected Julie May to receive the SLA Scholarship because of her many activities within her student SLA chapter, coupled with her interests and activities in the specialized fields of art and design.

Jennifer Rohan earned a BA in Communications from UCLA, a Certificate in teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages from Seattle University and a Certificate in Advanced Spanish from University of Salamanca. She is a member of REFORMA, the National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish-Speaking. She recently began working towards her library degree at the University of Washington. Before beginning her degree program, Ms Rohan worked as a library associate at the Archdiocese of Seattle, where she created their library website. During her time at the Archdiocese, the staff analyzed the needs of their constituents and determined that they needed to develop a collection of religious educational videos in Spanish, which Ms Rohan helped to facilitate. As she advances in her library career, she sees "special librarianship as a vocation where I can invest my special talents and energy to serve others with thoughtfulness, insight and creative vision." The Scholarship Committee selected Jennifer Rohan to receive the SLA Scholarship because of her dedication to analyzing user needs, such as language of materials, and then to use her skills to provide a collection to address those identified needs.

Meghan Fahey earned a B.A in English from the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and an M.A Certificate in Medieval Literature from the University of Toronto. She is attending the Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science at Mount Holyoke College. Ms Fahey is a member of SLA and the Vice President and Webmaster of the Student Government group LISSA-West. She plans to "work with non-traditional library or archival collections." Ms Fahey's experience with special collections includes positions at the National Yiddish Book Center and the University of Massachusetts Amherst Archives and Special Collections. She says it is her "hope that [her]future with libraries will be full of unique situations in which [she] will be challenged to find ways to share the holdings of special libraries effectively and efficiently ... using current and cutting edge technologies in order to remain competitive and relevant."

The committee chose Meghan Fahey as a scholarship recipient because of her high degree of interest in special collections, her exceptional letters of recommendation, and her approach to Special Librarianship. In her letter of intent, Meghan made it clear that she has learned from her experience in special collections that it takes more to making a library successful than just maintaining a collection and serving the customer. She has seen how marketing outside of the traditional patron base can attract new patrons outside of the traditional, core customer base. In Meghan's words, "With thorough and ambitious outreach programs ... [librarians can open] the collections up to vast and varied patrons who each [find] unique and useful bits within the collection." Meghan also realizes how technology

will be an important piece of the picture and is enthusiastic about how libraries will use technology for outreach.

Affirmative Action Scholarship Recipient

Terence L. Johnson is pursuing an MLIS at the University of South Carolina. He also holds a B.A. in History and an M.A. in Religion from Florida State University, and has done graduate coursework in History at the University of Memphis. In his current position as a full-time collection development archivist for the University of South Carolina's South Caroliniana collection, Mr. Johnson utilizes audio and video to document the narratives of South Carolina's minority community, and states that "archiving the activities of various ethnic, racial, and religious groups...can serve to preserve histories that have generally been left out of history books." He has previously worked as a history and religion instructor at various colleges and as an intern at the National Civil Rights Museum, The Pink Palace Museum, and the Institute of Egyptian Art and Archaeology. He is a member of the South Carolina chapter and the Museums, Arts, and Humanities division of SLA. The SLA Scholarship Committee selected Terence Johnson based on his work history, his excellent recommendations and interview, his understanding of special libraries, and his clear career goals. It is his hope, that through "collection development and community outreach, people of different cultures can better understand one another."

Mary Adeline Connor Professional Development Scholarship Recipient

Vaishali Jahagirdar is enrolled in an MSLS program at The Catholic University of America. Prior to her enrollment, she was employed for five years as a professional librarian at Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Ltd. in Mumbai, India. She has completed both a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Library Science from the University of Mumbai. She enrolled in her current degree program to "expand her outlook and explore the world of Library & Information Sciences beyond her present qualifications" and believes that one must "embrace and adapt to change with determination and optimism." Ms Jahagirdar states that "it is no longer enough to present...a pile of documents as an answer to a question. I must be able to present the best possible information in a timely manner in the best possible format for the client." She is a member of the Washington, D.C. chapter and the Pharmaceutical division of SLA. The SLA Scholarship Committee was impressed by Ms. Jahagirdar's work history and her willingness to pursue an MLIS from an American university after completing full coursework in India. She received good recommendations and wrote a strong personal statement outlining her goals both within her degree program and as information professional.