

Winners of the MAC Distinguished Service Award and MAC Presidents' Award

Date: April 29, 2020

To: Erik Moore, President, Midwest Archives Conference

From: Presidents' Award Committee, Amy Cooper Cary (chair);
Jennifer Johnson; David McCartney

RE: Winners of the MAC Distinguished Service Award and MAC Presidents' Award

Dear Erik,

In this time of pandemic, it is especially heartening to be able to provide you with two awards from the Presidents' Award Committee: for the MAC Distinguished Service Award (which has not been awarded since 2010) and for the MAC Presidents' Award. The committee was unanimous in its decision to make these two awards.

Note that we recognize that the primary nominator of Kären Mason for the Distinguished Service Award, Christine Wideman, is not a member of MAC. The guidelines state: "Any MAC member may nominate another MAC member for the Distinguished Service Award by writing a nominating letter or E-mail, accompanied by sufficient biographical and professional documentation about the nominee to enable Committee members to make an informed decision, and submitting them to the Chair. Members of the Committee, or the Committee as a whole, are eligible to submit nominations." Kären Mason also received nominations from three MAC members, and the committee as a whole is, in this case, also willing to nominate her. Christine Wideman is named as a primary nominator out of professional courtesy, because of her long-time association with Mason.

We are presenting these to you for you to share at the MAC Council Meeting, to be held virtually on Friday May 8. I will work to notify nominators and nominees of the results of the award, and to include a write-up for the *MAC Newsletter*. I want to recognize the work of the Presidents' Award Committee members who gathered nominations, and I especially want to recognize the input of Jennifer Johnson and David McCartney. Though extreme circumstances may have delayed my own action, the input of my fellow past presidents is always thoughtful, considered, and timely.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Cooper Cary

Chair, MAC Presidents' Award Committee

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(Continued from page 5)

Winner of the MAC Distinguished Service Award: Dr. Kären M. Mason, curator of the Iowa Women's Archives, University of Iowa, nominated by Christine Wideman, with support of Tanya Zanish-Belcher, Rachel Vagts, and Matthew Schaefer.

The MAC Distinguished Service Award is given in recognition of significant contributions to MAC and/or to the archival profession in the Midwest by an active MAC member. Candidates for the Distinguished Service Award must have made remarkable contributions to MAC or to the archival profession during their career. Significant contributions may include extensive or superior volunteer work in an elected or appointed role within MAC; unusually important innovation, leadership, or crisis management; and notable success in expanding the visibility and/or support of MAC. Outstanding contributions to the archival community may include striking work or activities that have dramatically improved the preservation of or accessibility to historically valuable documents or records, or that have resulted in a significantly better public appreciation of archival work and activities.

Kären Mason has been involved with the Midwest Archives Conference for more than 30 years and has served the organization in multiple capacities in governance, meeting organization, and on committees. In addition to her contributions to MAC, she has made exceptional contributions to the profession, serving as curator of the Iowa Women's Archives (IWA), a repository devoted to women's history that has gained a worldwide reputation for its excellence. As her nominators note, Mason has been a devoted advocate of underserved women's voices and has spearheaded the documentation of diverse voices in the area. She has written extensive, authoritative works on women's history, on women's representation in the archival profession, and on the importance of documenting women's voices. Mason has mentored many young archivists, and her excellence has been recognized both by the University of Iowa and by the state in awards for her work. The Presidents' Award Committee is thrilled to recognize and applaud our colleague Kären Mason for her contributions to the Midwest Archives Conference and to the archives profession.

Winner of the MAC Presidents' Award: Dr. Janice W. Fernheimer, director of the Interdisciplinary Program in Jewish Studies at the University of Kentucky and professor in the Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and Digital Studies in UK's College of Arts and Sciences. Nominated by Sarah Dorpinghaus, University of Kentucky via Heather Fox, Presidents' Award Committee member, Kentucky representative.

The MAC Presidents' Award was established in 1986 and is dedicated to recognizing significant contributions to the archival profession by individuals, institutions, and organizations that are not directly involved in archival work but are knowledgeable about its purpose and value. The Presidents' Award Committee comprises one representative from each MAC state and MAC's three immediate past presidents.

Dr. Janice Fernheimer is being awarded the MAC Presidents' Award for her collaborative work on the Jewish Heritage Fund for Excellence Jewish Kentucky Oral History Project. Working with Sarah Dorpinghaus, Fernheimer sought to actively integrate archival resources and digital tools into her courses, and also worked with the community to enhance the Jewish-related holdings at the University of Kentucky's Special Collections Research Center (SCRC). Fernheimer has challenged students to conduct oral history interviews that have enhanced the SCRC's holdings. She has also served as a liaison to the Jewish community, working to facilitate the donation of over 40 linear feet of materials that document the Jewish experience in Lexington. Dorpinghaus points out that "Jewish Kentucky is one of SCRC's fastest growing research topics." Fernheimer is an advocate for the interdisciplinary significance of the archives, writing in scholarly publications, speaking at symposia, and editing a special issue of the *Journal of Jewish Identities* that brings this scholarship to light. She is a "scholar, teacher, innovator and advocate for archives and primary sources" and has had a significant influence on the successful practice at the University of Kentucky Libraries Special Collections Research Center. It gives us tremendous pleasure to award Dr. Janice Fernheimer the MAC Presidents' Award.