

## **Awards and Scholarships**

### **MAC 2021 Presidents' Award: A Statement from Amy Cooper Cary (Chair), Jennifer Johnson, and David McCartney**

We have chosen not to make the Presidents' Award this year. In this pandemic year, we did not have sufficient nominees who qualified for the nature of the award, which is to recognize contributions by "individuals, institutions, and organizations not directly involved in archival work." However, as the three most recent former presidents of MAC, and as the judges for this award, we would like to recognize the exceptional nature of our current social and professional environment, and to reflect on our profession in this time of uncertainty.

First, we would like to recognize our professional colleagues this year. The global public health crisis, caused by the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19), has placed repositories across our region into circumstances that none of us could have foreseen. We have spent the year shifting our services from physical to virtual, supporting patrons who have suddenly found themselves teaching and learning online. We have done this when we, ourselves, have been required to be remote from our physical materials, unable to work with them or provide reference from them. We have experienced crises in our institutions that have reduced budgets, staff, and services. We have been faced with the challenges of working from our living rooms, kitchens, or basements. And, while we have enjoyed sharing stories about baking bread, doing yoga, taking walks, or any of the myriad things we've done to keep our spirits up, it is most important that we have found ways to survive. We have suddenly needed

to devote time to schooling our children, taking care of parents, and supporting spouses, partners, friends, and neighbors. We have experienced a sea-change of constraints—personal and professional—that will likely impact our lives and our work for years to come. We have had to find a way through a crisis we never imagined, and we're tired, but even now we aren't yet done.

And yet....

We have all sat in Zoom meetings with colleagues who are devising creative, comprehensive ways to provide information from their holdings to those who need it. We have seen brilliant outreach efforts being made to engage people who, of necessity, cannot come through our doors. We are discussing new digital projects, new ways to teach, new audiences for our materials. For those of us who are back in our repositories, we're finding ways to provide access to materials while keeping people safe. We are imaginative, creative, focused on the importance of our work, and aware of the critical need for the archival record in times of societal crisis. We are passionate, and we are resilient.

As we pass the one-year mark of the pandemic, we would like to recognize all of you. We would like to recognize all of the work that you've done in extenuating circumstances and the extra effort that you have all taken to make sure that people continue to have access to the archival record. Thank you all.