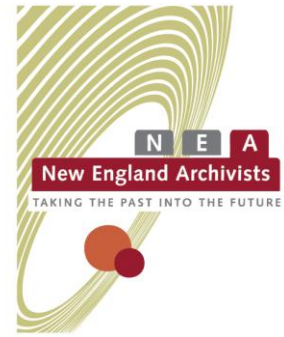


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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New England Archivists Officially Adopts a Diversity and Inclusion Statement

The New England Archivists (NEA) is pleased to announce our official Inclusion and Diversity Statement, adopted at the June 2014 NEA Board meeting. As the beginning of a concerted effort to increase diversity within our membership and to encourage members' efforts to improve the diversity of their collections and user communities, it reads:

New England Archivists (NEA) supports inclusion and diversity as core values in achieving its mission. NEA is committed to building and maintaining an inclusive environment where differences of opinion, beliefs, and values are sought, listened to, respected, and valued. Through inclusion, NEA is dedicated to expanding membership, participation, and leadership that reflect the broad diversity of New England.

The adoption of the statement is "an important first step in building an organization that is reflective of all archivists across New England. This statement will serve as a touchstone for deciding on a path forward for inclusion and diversity within NEA," affirms NEA President Jill Snyder. As the next step, the NEA Board will appoint an Inclusion and Diversity Coordinator to lead NEA's efforts.

The diversity initiative had its start in 2010 with the passage of a new member-approved strategic plan. In 2011, the NEA Board formed a Diversity Task Force, co-chaired by Karen Adler Abramson (of the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library) and Michelle Gachette (of Harvard University), charged with compiling research, engaging NEA members in the process, and presenting their findings to the larger organization. In the final report, submitted to the NEA Board in 2013, the Diversity Task Force recommended that NEA establish a sustainable inclusion and diversity program.

With the help of consultant Madeline McNeely of Conditioning Leaders, the NEA Board began to plan the process of formally integrating inclusion and diversity throughout the organization. The first action item, drafting an official statement, resulted in three versions which were presented to NEA membership for comment. Obtaining the feedback of members was a vital aspect of this process, as ensuring the voices of all NEA members are heard is one component of the inclusion effort.

Colin Lukens, NEA Vice-President, emphasized the need to maintain the statement as a living document: "We will continue to request input from our membership on how it can be improved and more accurately reflect the nature of NEA membership and the archival profession."

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To read the final report from the Diversity Task Force, please visit the NEA website:

<http://www.newenglandarchivists.org/pdfs/DiversityTaskForceFinalReport20130602.pdf>

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About New England Archivists

Founded in 1973, New England Archivists is the premier professional organization in the field of archives and special collections in the New England region. Archivists are professionals who collect, arrange, describe, and provide access to historical documents. With approximately 600 members, the organization connects the archival community through meetings, workshops, and online resources. NEA facilitates professional development by offering a number of workshops and meetings per year.

NEA is committed to increasing public awareness of archival work and to informing historians, genealogists, students, and journalists, among others, about archival resources. NEA also works with related professions, such as records managers, librarians, and town clerks, to promote the sharing of information. For more information about NEA please visit the New England Archivists website at www.newenglandarchivists.org.