

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
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**Award Honoring Mark A. Greene
(Prepared by Nancy Beaumont)**

BACKGROUND

SAA Fellow Mark A. Greene was still making an indelible impression on the profession at the time of his passing in July 2017. He was the director of the American Heritage Center at the University of Wyoming from 2002 until his retirement in 2015. Previously he was college archivist for Carleton College (1985–1989), curator of manuscripts for the Minnesota Historical Society (1989–2000), and head of the Research Center Programs at the Henry Ford (2000–2002).

Mark was the quintessential archives professional. He served as president of both SAA (2007–2008) and the Midwest Archives Conference. He chaired the SAA Manuscripts Repository Section, Congressional Papers Roundtable, and Committee on Education and Professional Development. He published more than twenty peer-reviewed articles and chapters in US, Canadian, British, Swiss, Spanish, and Brazilian archival publications on the topics of appraisal and collection development, reappraisal and deaccessioning, business records, congressional collections, privacy in personal papers, the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act, using university archives as instructional material, working with underrepresented communities, the tension between context and content in archival theory, the relevance of postmodernism to practicing archivists, collecting and preserving websites, and archival values. He is perhaps best known for “[More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing](#)” (*The American Archivist* 2005), which he co-authored with Dennis Meissner. Mark was passionate about what he considered the art of archival appraisal—the willingness to make the hard choices.

Mark’s other passion was acting as a mentor for archivists entering the field and those navigating the minefields of administration. This was particularly evident in the many tributes to him written after his death. Samantha Winn of Virginia Tech noted, “Beyond his many contributions to archival literature, I will always be grateful to Mark Greene for his generosity towards the Students and New Archives Professionals section. He was one of the first established archivists to embrace SNAP’s mission, and he dedicated a great amount of time to sharing his experiences and expertise with SNAP members.” SAA Council Member Amy Cooper Cary recalled: “Mark chose to mentor me, encouraging me to undertake leadership opportunities when I wasn’t quite sure of my ability, listening and answering questions, always ready for a chat. I can only overcome some of my own personal sadness by making more efforts to mentor new archivists and to continue to be involved in the archival literature—honoring the impact Mark had on me.”

DISCUSSION

A group of Mark's long-time colleagues have been discussing how SAA might honor his lasting impact on the archives profession and on SAA. Although early discussions focused on creating a distinguished lectureship to honor his intellectual contributions, they ultimately determined that an award—particularly one that focuses on recognizing and supporting young leaders who are making their way in the profession—might be the best way to honor him.

The mission and purpose of SAA's existing Emerging Leader Award would seem to align with Mark's own commitment and approach to mentoring. For this reason his colleagues recommend that the Emerging Leader Award be renamed to honor and commemorate Mark A. Greene:

Society of American Archivists Mark A. Greene Emerging Leader Award

Purpose and Criteria for Selection: Created in 2011, this award celebrates and encourages early-career archivists who have completed archival work of broad merit, demonstrated significant promise of leadership, and/or performed commendable service to the archives profession. The award was renamed in honor of SAA Fellow and Past President Mark A. Greene in 2017 in honor of his long-standing commitment to mentoring young leaders.

Nominees will have more than two years and less than ten years of professional archives experience. Nominees must be SAA members and must meet as many of the following criteria as possible:

- Work of merit that has made a substantive contribution to an area (or areas) of the archives profession beyond the nominee's local institution and that holds promise for future contributions.
- Demonstrated leadership through collaborative work or exemplary service to local, regional, and/or national archival and cultural associations.
- ~~Formal archival education through a graduate degree program in history, library science, information science, or a related field; through participation in an archival or preservation institute; and/or through certification by the Academy of Certified Archivists.~~
- Involvement in successful outreach and advocacy efforts on behalf of the nominee's institution and the archives profession.

The group further suggests that the Council may wish to reconsider the award's requirement for "formal archival education," as this may be preempted by the requirements for experience.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Do Council members agree that it would be appropriate to honor Mark Greene by renaming the Emerging Leader Award?
- If not, do you have other ideas for honoring him?