



# ACA News

The Newsletter of the Academy of Certified Archivists Issue 113 Summer 2021

## President's Message

Tomaro Taylor, CA  
USF Libraries  
Tampa, FL



The Academy of Certified Archivists is made up of more than 1300 individuals from the US and around the world whose professional and academic experiences have led them to archival certification.

Wherever you are on the globe, and whatever your reason for becoming a Certified Archivist, I'm happy to have had the opportunity to serve as your President. As my term in office comes to a close, please allow me to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to you—our members—for entrusting me with leadership of our organization during what turned out to be one of the most challenging years many of us will ever experience in our lifetimes. Thank you, also, for your confidence in the ACA Board and for your continued support as we proactively addressed many necessary, but often unanticipated, operational and procedural changes to keep us moving forward.

We couldn't have done it without you. And, I couldn't have done it without:

**Tim Slavin, CA**, outgoing Immediate Past President, whose evenness offered calm and rationality during difficult decision-making;

**Gerianne "Gerri" Schaad, CA**, incoming President, whose many years of recent service to the ACA, particularly as Treasurer, provided institutional memory, fiscal responsiveness, and an eye towards the future;

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**President's Message** *(continued from previous page)*

**Marie Force, CA**, outgoing Secretary, whose exceptional meeting minutes and record keeping laid the foundation for three out of four President's messages from yours truly;

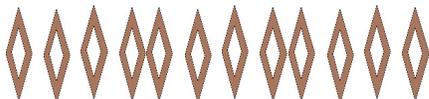
**Laura Botts, CA** and **Ann Hodges, CA**, Treasurer and Regent for Examination Development, respectively, with whom I've served twice in different roles and at different times in our careers, and whose roles position the ACA for positive change in targeted directions;

**Rosemary Pleva Flynn, CA** and **Stephanie Bayless, CA**, Regents for Examination Administration and Examination Recertification, respectively, whose keenness for process and procedure never took precedent over the human element;

**Joshua Kitchens, CA** and **Michelle Ganz, CA**, Regents for Outreach and Member Services, respectively, whose enthusiasm for supporting potential, new, and existing members spawned an official study guide, a revamped Web presence, increased volunteerism, and membership happy hours;

and, **Michael T. Breslin**, honorary CA and unsung hero of the ACA (along with Capitol Hill Management Services), who helps us maintain consistency and continuity through each and every transition we make.

My thanks to the 2021-2022 Academy of Certified Archivists' Officers and Regents! I look forward to working with the incoming Board and helping them achieve their goals. Please join all of us at this year's Annual Business Meeting on Friday, August, 20, 2021 at 3:00PM ET. If you're free beforehand, we'll see you at 2:30 PM ET for a casual get-together.

**ACA Officers**

President (2020-2021)	<b>Tomaro Taylor, CA</b> USF Libraries Tampa, FL
Vice President/ President-Elect (2020-2021)	<b>Gerianne Schaad, CA</b> Florida Southern College Lakeland, FL
Treasurer (2020-2022)	<b>Laura M. Botts, CA</b> Mercer University Macon, GA
Secretary (2019-2021)	<b>Marie Force, CA</b> Delta Flight Museum Atlanta, GA
Regent for Examination Administration (2019-2021)	<b>Rosemary Pleva Flynn, CA</b> University of North Dakota Energy & Environmental Research Center Grand Forks, ND
Regent for Examination Development (2020-2022)	<b>Ann Hodges, CA</b> University of Texas at Arlington Fort Worth, TX
Regent for Certification Maintenance (2019-2021)	<b>Stephanie Bayless, CA</b> National Archives at San Francisco San Bruno, CA
Regent for Outreach (2018-2020)	<b>Joshua Kitchens, CA</b> Clayton State University Morrow, GA
Regent for Membership (2020-2021)	<b>Michelle Ganz, CA</b> The History Factory Washington, DC
Immediate Past President & Re- gent for Nominations (2019-2020)	<b>Timothy A. Slavin, CA</b> Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs Dover, DE

Contact information for the Officers and Regents is available on the ACA website:  
[www.certifiedarchivists.org/about-us/officers.html](http://www.certifiedarchivists.org/about-us/officers.html)



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## From the Vice President/ President-Elect

Gerrienne Schaad, CA  
Florida Southern College  
Lakeland, FL



As former president Louis E. Jones said in his final report as Vice President, the position of “President Elect has been an illuminating experience that has widened my perspective on and in-sights about the Academy” especially in times of pandemic and switching over to a new membership management software platform that improves and extends the functionality and capabilities of front-end services and administrative activities.

My service as a member of the Exam Administration Committee has strengthened my belief in the Board decision to contract with Prolydian to create software which will integrate applying for the exam, taking the test, and updating membership status. Reviewing the applicants and their qualifications led us on the committee to suggest a new membership status to better engage newcomers who have passed the test but need work experience. The provisional membership category was approved in the recent electronic membership vote and will be implemented with the class of 2021.

Membership on the Exam Development Committee has reiterated my understanding of the finer points of exam question writing, which requires in-depth reading in an area of the archival literature as well as thoughtful consideration of proposed questions for all seven ACA domains. It has also brought my attention to the fact that the Item Bank as a whole needs to be examined holistically, especially while considering a new Domain for Cultural Competency. Work toward this Domain has occurred in an ad-hoc task force and that data will need to come

to the Exam Development Committee this coming year.

I also chaired the Finance Committee, the members of which provided input on the organization’s financial future and discussed whether or not fees should be implemented and if so at what level. The members voted to increase dues, and they were implemented this year. Thank you to Laura Botts, current Treasurer, Todd Welch, former Treasurer and past President, and Brenda McClurkin, member at large, who served with me on the committee.

I sat on the task force for Certification Maintenance as we revised points for the gap year created by the pandemic. This led to discussion of the whole process and recommendations to the Board. More information will be provided in the coming months.

Finally, of course, I have served as the organization’s Ombudsman. I have mostly answered questions about application requirements for those wishing to take the certification exam. Monthly telephone/Team meetings with ACA President Tomaro Taylor and ACA Secretariat Mike Breslin have also played an important part in my understanding of the organization and the needs of ACA members. As I enter the presidency, I thank outgoing President, Tomaro Taylor, for her excellent examples of diplomacy and look forward to continuing to work with my fellow Officers, Regents, Committee Volunteers, and Members, as we work towards building more opportunities to make the Academy even better.

### Call for Content

Do you have photos of a past ACA event, you and your fellow CAs, or an exciting project/program you'd like to promote? The Regent for Member Services is looking for images for our social media pages; if you'd like to be featured please email Michelle at [memberservices@certifiedarchivists.org](mailto:memberservices@certifiedarchivists.org).

## From the Regent for Certification Maintenance

Stephanie Bayless, CA  
National Archives at San Francisco  
San Bruno, CA



We may not have had any recertification petitions to review this year, but we certainly kept busy! Three volunteer groups have been hard at work improving the recertification process and prepping for a move to a digital petition next year:

**COVID-19 Extended Petition Guidelines** - This group developed updated petition review guidelines to help our members who will be submitting six years of activities during their next recertification cycle. These have been approved by the Board and are ready to be officially issued.

**Preapproved ARCs** - This group standardized and updated all of the classes and activities that are preapproved for archival recertification credits. They also took this opportunity to add other recurring educational opportunities to our list (such as those from SAA). All of this will be available on our new website to connect you with the education opportunities you need.

**Holistic Recertification Process** - This group is taking a high-level look at the entire recertification process with an eye towards streamlining and restructuring to bring you a more effective petition process. They have already identified several areas needing improvement that will impact recertification long-term. Stay tuned!

All of the work we are doing now has an end-goal of making your time as a Certified Archivist less cumbersome and more rewarding. I

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## From the Regent for Membership

Michelle Ganz, CA  
McDonough Innovations  
Charlottesville, VA



Regent of Member Services  
End of Year report

Congratulations to our new CAs!

This year has been chaotic, and I want to thank everyone who volunteered to work on Member Services tasks. We were able to contact all members with outstanding dues, many of whom went on to renew their membership. We also laid the groundwork for several projects to be completed in the 2021-2022 year.

In this coming year we will continue the regular Happy Hours on a regular monthly schedule rotating across five time zones. I will be scheduling the dates/times at our business meeting. Once the schedule is set I'll be looking for volunteers to Host one of twelve meetings.

We will also be rolling out a new educational portal on the ACA website as well as some new programs designed to provide our members with support.

Stay tuned for more details coming soon.

Here's a breakdown of the 2020-21 year:

### Social Media:

#### Facebook:

- ~2000 followers
- Between 150 and 400 people engage with each post
- Posting a few times per month

#### LinkedIn:

- 862 followers
- Posting a few times per month
- Between 1 and 60 people engage with each post

#### Twitter:

- 1062 followers
- Posting monthly
- People regularly tag the ACA in posts

#### Happy Hours:

- Hosted by Regents and volunteers
- 20-40 people per event
- International participation
- One volunteer wrote a newsletter piece about her experience.

## From the Regent for Certification Maintenance *(continued from previous page)*

won't list individuals here, but I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to everyone who served on one or more of these working groups. Your work is important and appreciated.

## From the Treasurer

Laura M. Botts, CA  
Mercer University  
Macon, GA



Most of my activities as Treasurer have been pretty straightforward: approving invoices, preparing the budget, and working with the Finance Committee to plan for our future. The Academy's finances continue to be in good shape this year as our expenses have remained lower than usual (no travel or in-person meeting costs), and the stock market has rebounded from last year. The move to Prolydian for our management platform and the implementation of the online exam have gone well, and the change from PayPal payments to Stripe has been effective. We look forward to seeing Academy members in person again soon.

## From the Regent for Outreach

Joshua Kitchens, CA  
Clayton State University  
Morrow, GA



This year our outreach efforts have expanded. In addition to hosting sessions for student archivist, we started our first ever study sessions for the CA exam. This included some interesting social media posts, creating a new study guide, and a series of monthly sessions that let us talk to prospective CA about planning for and taking the exam. This allowed us to reach nearly 100 prospective CA's before they took their exam to hopefully help them on their test taking adventure.

Outreach's big plan for next year is to start working on a brand identity for ACA. This means everything from choosing our branding colors, contemplating a new logo, and most importantly, having conversations about what it means to be a CA and how that can be explained to prospective applicants. If you are interested in helping with these efforts, let me know at [outreach@certfiedarchivists.org](mailto:outreach@certfiedarchivists.org).

Forced to go online in 2020, we learned a lot in a very short period of time. With our largest ever number of examinees, the experience of the 2020 exam demonstrated that the time had come to make the switch and keep the exam online. With many of approximately 100 additional examinees specifically saying they took the 2020 exam because it was being offered online, the ACA Board knew there would be no turning back. In addition, the removal of travel costs is a significant savings for examinees at a time of heightened financial uncertainty or underemployment for many.

Taking what we learned, we administered the 2021 exam via Zoom with live proctoring by CAs. Examinees had staggered start times over the three days. We are still learning and appreciate all of the comments we received from the examinees in the post-exam survey. We will use these comments to refine everything even more as we prepare for the 2022 exam which will be held online June 9–11, 2022. If you need to recertify by exam, you should mark these dates on your calendar now.

In addition to taking the exam online last year, we also instituted a new policy to no longer give out the passing score. Since each exam version is different, passing scores and the distribution of all scores are not the same between versions. Last year we started letting examinees know where their scores fell within a band of scores – High Pass, Pass, Low Pass, and Did Not Pass. We started this because the banding can be standardized across different exam versions once we knew the passing score for that particular version. Some organizations, for example, if you were taking the LSAT, still use banding with number ranges, but using something like that is more confusing to people since ours is only a 100-question test.

Do you know an archivist who did not pass the

## From the Regent for Examination Administration

Rosemary Pleva Flynn, CA  
University of North Dakota Energy &  
Environmental Research Center  
Grand Forks, ND



On June 24–26, 2021, 125 archivists joined our CA proctors online for the 2021 certified archivist examination. Congratulations to all of our new CAs and to our new Provisional members who now have the opportunity to join their colleagues under the new membership level while they work towards completing their professional experience requirement.

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### From the Regent for Exam Administration

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exam? They are probably disappointed and discouraged. They are maybe even questioning themselves about what they know and have learned so far as an archivist. The domains and the associated role delineation statements cover a lot of information. It does not mean that they do not know these areas at all. What it often means is that they may have not been exposed to the content those particular questions on that particular exam were asking. Certification

exams are meant to be difficult. I learned a few things when I took the exam this year to check the testing environment. There is always more to learn. Please encourage your colleagues to reach out to me at [examadmin@certifiedarchivists.org](mailto:examadmin@certifiedarchivists.org) if they have questions.

### Announcing the 2022 Exam Dates

Online on June 9–11, 2022

Please send any comments, ideas, or suggestions about *ACA News* to:

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