





THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

TO: Cultural Education Committee

FROM: Mark Schaming 

SUBJECT: Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services for New York's Collecting Organizations

DATE: January 11, 2018

AUTHORIZATION(S): 

SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

A new statewide program of the New York State Archives and State Library provides free planning and education services to support preservation of and access to historical records and unique library research materials held by New York's 4,500 collecting institutions.

Reason(s) for Consideration

Education Law section 140 "Historical Documentary Heritage Grants and Aid" mandates the State Archives to provide advisory and assistance programs for non-government historical records repositories. Education Law "Apportionment of State Aid to Libraries and Library Systems" §273(7) establishes a program in the State Library to support preservation and conservation of unique library research materials.

Background Information

In 2016 the State Archives and State Library together launched the Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services for New York (DHPSNY) to coordinate support for preservation of and access to historically valuable materials. Services are delivered statewide through a single service provider operating under contract with the State Education Department.

Programs delivered by DHPSNY include:

- Site visits that assess collection needs and organizational capacity in order to build sustainable programs to preserve and provide access to historical materials.
- A diverse array of in-person and online educational services, including training in preservation, access to collections, disaster preparedness, and additional topics delivered across the state.
- A suite of resources including the information-packed DHPSNY website, monthly newsletter, mentorship opportunities, and ready access to a staff of experts in preservation, conservation and archival administration.

The fall of 2017 marked the completion of the first year of service delivery using this new model. It was a successful year for DHPSNY as indicated by:

- 65,561 interactions with collections professionals via social media, newsletters, and web site
- 823 individuals attending free onsite or online educational programs
- 45 institutions receiving free planning and assessment services
- 14,931 miles travelled by DHPSNY staff across the state to deliver services to the stewards of New York's collecting institutions.

2018 initiatives include implementation of:

- The first online directory of New York State's collecting institutions
- The first statewide effort to coordinate collections development in order to ensure an equitable historical record
- 15 new workshops across the State
- 15 new webinars

Users of DHPSNY services across New York have attested to our success in year one:

"These workshops are superb. I am a seasoned archivist but we must depend on so many volunteers, and archival basics are not always intuitive. I will encourage anyone to attend."

"The workshop brought to light several things that we were lax on. Since the training, the collection, acquisition, and de-accessioning policies have been updated and in certain cases created."

"Thank you! Your help gives us insights and encouragement."

“[Our organization] has been so fortunate to establish a relationship with DHPSNY. From being able to attend their very informative workshops to being a grateful recipient of a Needs Assessment Survey, DHPSNY has truly been impactful on our archives and archival practices.”

“I had no background in archives and have been charged with the task of organizing 60 years of our theater’s history. This [workshop] was an excellent introduction for me.”