



SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY

May 9, 2019

This is the time of year when Society members turn their attention towards next year's SAA meeting with the Open Call for Submissions. In some ways, this year is no different. SAA is contracted to have another meeting and many rely on this event to network and share information and ideas. In other ways, this meeting is remarkably different—because the Society will learn from and address squarely the events of the 2019 meeting in Albuquerque.

Our goal is to prevent those who have official sanctions or negative findings against them from attending SAA events. To this end, the Board of Directors has created new attendance requirements. Beginning with the 85th Annual Meeting, all potential presenters and attendees will be required to certify they do not have and have never been the subject of a negative finding on a Title IX investigation; and do not have and have not had a current or pending disciplinary action, such as suspension or termination of registration, resulting from a Register of Professional Archaeologists' grievance investigation.

The Board has also established a Task Force to “review and update the SAA's existing policies on sexual harassment (2015) and anti-harassment (2018) and the procedures for implementing these policies at SAA events, so that the situations that occurred at the 2019 SAA annual meeting do not happen again. The task force will report to the Board with short-term and longer-term recommendations on a schedule to be established in conjunction with its board liaison, President Watkins.” The Board desires to give this body its complete support but also to foster the need for the Task Force to have outside ideas and guidance, which it hopes can be accomplished by encouraging non-member advisers to be appointed.

In addition to revising policies and procedures, the Society is also hearing from its members about the pervasiveness of harassment. While the Society does not bear the burden of the entire field, we are responsible for our organization, and we hope to use our experiences to effect change in our organization. To this end, I have requested that the focus of the 85th Annual Meeting's Opening Session be harassment in the field. One of the primary goals of that session will be to address the need and possibilities for change in our organization so that SAA can be a stronger protector and advocate for all archaeologists.

With this spirit in mind, I hope groups and individuals will come together and use the meeting as it has always been intended: to foster dialogue and even controversy about archaeology.

The open call for submissions will be available online from May 9, 2019, and will close at 3:00 pm Eastern time on September 5, 2019. Since there will NOT be any options for extensions, I'm encouraging you to submit early, and encourage your colleagues and session participants to do so

as well. SAA Board policy is that it is a privilege of membership to be able to participate on the program, and so presenters on the Austin program must be members of SAA in 2020.

Before I conclude, I have to address a final dimension to the 2020 SAA Annual Meeting. Texas falls under California's "Prohibition on State-Funded and State-Sponsored Travel to States with Discriminatory Laws." Thus, employees of the State of California, including university and college professors, will not be reimbursed for travel to our meeting in Texas. SAA signed our contract with Austin before this travel ban had been adopted in California. Austin is a progressive city. It's a university town and has a thriving LGBTQI community. SAA has included a list of LGBTQI-friendly establishments on our meetings pages. The meeting will be at the Austin Convention Center, overlooking the Colorado River and adjacent to 6th Street – the street that made Austin the "live music capital of the world." Those of you who came to the 2014 meeting may recall that Austin has a distinct vibe and the Convention Center is situated so that members can easily participate in the city's unique spirit.

It is my hope that SAA has begun a journey, and while it will not have arrived at its final destination by April 22nd, when the Presidential Opening Session begins, I truly believe we can collectively get there. I hope you will join me in Austin, Texas, for the SAA's 85th Annual Meeting.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joe Watkins".

Joe Watkins, PhD, RPA
President