

L.A. as Subject Archives Forum and USC Libraries Joint Memorandum

Date: August 5, 2009

To: Members of the L.A. as Subject Archives Forum

From: Ken McGuire
Chair, L.A. as Subject Archives Forum and Executive Committee

Catherine Quinlan
Dean of the USC Libraries

Re: L.A. as Subject and the USC Libraries

Greetings to members of the L.A. as Subject Archives Forum:

On Tuesday, July 28, 2009, at USC's Doheny Memorial Library, members of the L.A. as Subject Executive Committee—outgoing and incoming members as well as the past chair—met with Catherine Quinlan, Dean of the USC Libraries, and two members of the Dean's Cabinet: Marje Schuetze-Coburn, Senior Associate Dean; and Hugh McHarg, Executive Director of Communications and Public Programming.

This meeting resulted in several decisions, and information on those actions follows below. Before we get into the details, however, we are pleased to report that this was a very productive session. We believe the steps we are taking now will yield tremendous immediate and long-term benefits for L.A. as Subject, our growing and diverse membership, and for ongoing collaborations with our host institution, the University of Southern California. Together, we will break new ground in the search for what is truly Los Angeles.

Toward these ends, the discussion covered four main points:

- **The relationship between the L.A. as Subject Archives Forum and the USC Libraries**

The Executive Committee is dedicated to an ongoing relationship with the USC Libraries. Dean Quinlan expressed that the USC Libraries are committed to a continuing relationship with and financial support for L.A. as Subject.

As the host institution, the libraries will work with the L.A. as Subject Archives Forum to enrich educational programming, improve the content and accessibility of the directory database, and expand our membership and our use of technology to enhance community outreach.

Dean Quinlan believes strongly in open communication between the Archives Forum and the USC Libraries and looks forward to actively participating in visits to member institutions. The Executive Committee offered Dean Quinlan an open invitation to attend our meetings and indicated that we stand willing to assist USC in collaborative ventures that will strengthen both parties.

- **The L.A. as Subject Archives Forum's Web site and directory hosted by the USC Libraries**

The group discussed the L.A. as Subject Web presence in detail. The Executive Committee emphasized to the dean and Hugh that the online technology Archives Forum members use to communicate internally and with the public is a high priority. The Executive Committee expressed that the most urgent need is to update the site in time for the Archives Bazaar and that the current directory information should be made available for the event this October. Ken McGuire will coordinate with Hugh and the Executive Committee in this process and welcomes any input.

- **The 2009 L.A. as Subject Archives Bazaar at USC**

Michael Palmer of the ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives reported on the status of Archives Bazaar planning. Michael recently stepped in as chair of the Planning Committee. He and the committee members have quickly confirmed several panels and are completing a roster of potential author signings and film screenings. We expect this year's Archives Bazaar to succeed once again in showcasing our members' rich collections and providing great visibility to a large audience.

- **The L.A. as Subject Archives Forum manager position**

The Executive Committee, in discussion with Dean Quinlan, has determined that a reassessment of the duties, responsibilities, and hiring for this position is necessary to fulfill the mission statement and bylaws of L.A. as Subject. Accordingly, members of the Executive Committee and USC Libraries' leadership have begun drafting a new job description for this position.

Since this position will be designed to meet the priorities and needs of both USC Libraries and the L.A. as Subject Archives Forum, it is important that during the professional job search, review, and evaluation processes, a designated member of the Executive Committee be included.

In the interim, the Executive Committee has asked Liza Posas—and she has accepted—to carry out the responsibilities of this position as our liaison with the hosting institution. She will be an ad hoc member of the Executive Committee and will focus on managing the activities of the Archives Forum and the Executive Committee and will coordinate collaborations with the USC Libraries. This will continue until the manager's position is filled. We want to thank Liza for graciously accepting this request and look forward to assisting her in this worthwhile endeavor.

We would like to thank everyone who participated in this meeting and express our appreciation for the dedication and vision of the Executive Committee, the Archives Bazaar Planning Committee, our tremendous member institutions, and everyone at USC who works with L.A. as Subject. With a great passion for our mission, and with the USC Libraries as a proud host and partner, we look forward to the many achievements in our future.