

ACRL/RBMS CURATOR/CONSERVATOR DISCUSSION GROUP MINUTES

Curator/Conservator Discussion Group

June 27, 2010, 10:30-12:00

Renaissance Washington Hotel, Meeting Room 2

Guest Speaker: Christine Henry, Senior Program Officer, IMLS

Chaired by Ken Lavender

Attendance: 9

Ms. Henry gave an informative presentation on IMLS grants and their expectations of involvement of curators and conservators for successful proposals. She also outlined differences among the grants:

- Federal funds for conservation go primarily to museums;
- Money for the Historic Preservation Fund comes from proceeds from off-shore drilling contracts;
- Heritage grants help fund preservation programs in libraries and archives;
- "Connecting to Collections" grants aim to bring Libraries, Archives, and Museums together at the same table;
- For Native American programs, fewer than 20% are funded by IMLS. The rest are funded by NEH and other agencies.

Throughout IMLS conservation grants there is an increasing emphasis on planning. This is the basic criterion that underlies all evaluations. This includes preliminary surveys, action plans, and follow-up assessments.

There was lively and substantive participation from the attendees, focusing on specific problems and how IMLS could address them. Two considerations were the perennial lack of proper space and the mistreatment and discarding of nineteenth- and twentieth-century materials. Several felt that it was difficult to convince administrators and collection librarians that modern materials deserve as careful preservation consideration as older, that, in fact, modern materials are an important part of our history.

The session concluded with a rousing ovation for Ms. Henry and a new appreciation for the role that IMLS can play in the preservation of our collections.