

Presentation of the 2006 Leahy Award to Luciana Duranti

Annual Business Meeting of the Institute of Certified Records Managers

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Opening Remarks Eugenia Brumm

The Emmett Leahy Award is considered to be the most prestigious recognition given to a professional records manager. It is presented annually to recognize an individual whose contributions and outstanding accomplishments have had significant impact on the records and information management professions. It is differentiated from other awards in the following ways:

- The nominee does not have to be a member of a professional organization.
- The Award does not include a service component.
- The Award acknowledges the unique contributions of an individual who has moved the field in a direction that it might not have gone otherwise.
- The Award recognizes the visionary, the inventor and the prophet in records and information management.

The Emmett Leahy Award is not based on volume or number of contributions, although the recipient this year certainly could have won based on volume and number - if those would have been the criteria. The recipient this year has authored 3 books, edited one book, wrote 15 book chapters, 74 refereed articles and 39 non-refereed articles. In addition, this person has presented 180 formal papers and offered short courses, seminars and workshops in about 30 different universities and about 20 archival institutions worldwide, at the same time as teaching 4 courses at a major University and supervising students' theses.

The Emmett Leahy Award is not based on garnering significant amount of monies in grants, although the recipient this year certainly could have won based on having received over \$5 .5 million to conduct research and to fund projects surrounding electronic records. In addition, she has been responsible for additional funding being devoted to those projects in excess of \$10 million.

The Emmett Leahy Award is not based on revamping education for the profession, although the recipient this year certainly could have won based on developing new university courses, revamping those that existed and introducing the concepts and principles embedded in the 17th century science of diplomatics to form the foundation of records management. As a result of her incorporating a large body of theory, methods, international policies, strategies, standards and practices into the curriculum, in 1998, the Master of Archival Science program at the University of British Columbia won the first ever Society of American Archivists "Distinguished Service Award" given to an education program.

As important as this work has been in providing a conceptual and theoretical construct for our profession, it is more than matched by the recipient's work and contributions in the study of electronic records, their management, preservation and authenticity. The recipient has spearheaded international research projects and movements that have resulted in enormous, long-lasting and ground-breaking contributions to the field of electronic records. Beginning with a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) in 1994, the recipient collaborated with a colleague to conduct what was to become known

as the UBC Project - a study on the "Preservation of the Integrity of Electronic Records." The UBC Project defined the requirements for creating, handling and preserving reliable and authentic active electronic records. During the course of this study, the recipient collaborated with the United States Department of Defense Records Management Task Force to identify requirements for records management application software. The resulting requirements have become incorporated into what is DOD 5015.2 and in the MoReq Standard - Model Requirements for Management of Electronic Records - the latter co-authored by the recipient.

This early work led to the conception and development of InterPARES - International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems. In fact, it was interest in the findings of the UBC Project that launched the InterPARES project. This project was supported by a SSHRC Major Collaborative Research Initiative grant and several other matching funds by other Canadian institutions and by the granting agencies of the participating 13 countries for a total of \$8 million. This multi-disciplinary international research project began in 1998, directed and coordinated by the recipient. The research teams were: Australian, Canadian, Chinese, European, the Global Industry Research Team, Italian and the United States as well as national archival institutions. An International Team was created, comprised of representatives of all the research units and all the participating institutions, chaired by the recipient. This multi-disciplinary international research project addressed the long-term preservation of authentic electronic administrative records. Four Research domains addressed the following questions:

- What is required to prove the authenticity of electronic records?
- How do we select electronic records for preservation?
- How do we preserve authentic electronic records?
- What policies, strategies and standards will protect the authenticity of electronic records over time?

Over the life of InterPARES, it has involved more than 100 researchers from a total of 25 countries. The findings and products of InterPARES have had and are having a strong impact in all participating communities. The Requirements for Authenticity have become legislation in China and the metadata sets identified throughout the Chain of Preservation activities are being considered by ISO/TC 46/SC11. UNESCO has given the recipient two consecutive grants for adapting InterPARES findings to Caribbean and Latin American situations. The first grant has produced formal courses and workshops in several Latin countries and the Brazil electronic records program will be launched later this year. The InterPARES studies are remarkable not just for the collaborative methodology, but also for the impact of that collaboration. In her structuring of the InterPARES projects, the recipient has created a research community where none existed.

Earlier this year, the recipient was awarded the prestigious Killam Research Prize - a program that is designed to honor and support eminent Canadian scholars. The following are some comments made by the referees of this award:

Of InterPARES I, a referee states: that it "produced some signal results for the future of digital preservation. Perhaps the most fundamental and important was the notion of authentic digital copies."

Another referee has noted: "The true accomplishment here that will extend well beyond current funding and project outcomes is the establishment of an international and multidisciplinary network of researchers focusing on digital archiving and the preservation of electronic records. This is unprecedented and unimaginable only a decade ago."

The size, scope and impact of these efforts are enormous, and we have yet to see and experience all of the ripple effects of the work that she has spearheaded. It does go to prove that one person can make a difference. And that person is Dr. Luciana Duranti. The Emmett Leahy Awards Committee is proud to present the 2006 Emmett Leahy Award to Dr. Luciana Duranti.