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NDIIPP Holds Meeting with Partners, Advisory Board

The National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program (NDIIPP) held two very important meetings last month.

On July 12-13, representatives of the eight project partners, which received awards of nearly $14 million in September 2004 for digital preservation initiatives in support of NDIIPP, gathered in a Virginia suburb of Washington for their semiannual meeting to report to the partners on their progress and to discuss common concerns.

On July 14, many of these representatives met at the Library with members of the National Digital Strategy Advisory Board and offered presentations on the eight projects. The National Digital Strategy Advisory Board comprises a diverse group of individuals from academe, private industry and the federal government. These individuals have given generously of their time and expertise to provide invaluable input toward the long-term preservation initiative, and they have agreed to meet annually.

A full report on these two meetings will be issued soon at this Web site.

NDIIPP Program Manager Attends Records-Management Conference

Also in July, **William LeFurgy**, a project manager for NDIIPP who is overseeing the eight partnerships, attended the joint annual meeting of the Council of State Historical Records Coordinators and the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators in Richmond, Va. LeFurgy was invited by members of both organizations to speak about the NDIIPP states initiative and explore further collaborative opportunities. The Library of Congress has held three workshops with representatives of the 50 states, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories to bring them together to discuss common concerns and solutions for the preservation of their states' electronic information.

LeFurgy also discussed possible collaborations between the states and the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). Allen Weinstein, the recently appointed archivist of the United States, has committed NARA to closer ties with the states and asked to have this topic discussed during the meeting.

When LeFurgy met with the board of directors of the Council of State Historical Records Coordinators, he discussed the current status of the NDIIPP states initiative, including plans to conduct a comprehensive survey of state digital preservation activities and to build state profiles. The council is very interested in working with NDIIPP to host the profiles and undertake the long-term maintenance of a Web site for the material.

A conference session focusing on how the states can work with NARA in connection with its Electronic Records Archive (ERA) was informative. ERA is the Archives' project to build a digital preservation system for the government records it collects and makes available. ERA Director Ken Thibodeau said that the states could use ERA because it was designed to scale up or down.

"I've already seen ERA working on the desktop," he declared. Thibodeau noted that the first ERA increment in 2007 will emphasize "good records management" and will also recognize levels of service in terms of which object classes it will process and which it will store. He noted that there were different models for the states to potentially use in adopting ERA. One model could feature vendor software products based on ERA. Another could involve an "interstate compact" in which NARA could serve as a service bureau to different communities. He emphasized the importance of "stitchware," which he described as custom software code that links various commercial off-the shelf software products that will make up the bulk of ERA. Thibodeau said NARA could, under certain circumstances, share this stitchware with states.

Annual Meeting of the American Library Association

In June, **Guy Lamolinara**, special assistant for communications, attended the Annual Meeting of the American Library Association in Chicago. While there, he made daily presentations in the Library of Congress' exhibit booth on the National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program. The presentations drew a broad spectrum of ALA convention-goers, including librarians, archivists, IT professionals and vendors. Several NDIIPP partners also attended.

Lamolinara's presentation focused on the most recent program news, such as the eight awards made, in cooperation with the National Science Foundation, to fund the first digital-preservation research grants program. In May, 10 university teams received a total of $3 million to undertake pioneering research to support the long-term management of digital information. These awards are the outcome of a partnership between the Library of Congress and the NSF.

Library of Congress Participates in Polish Videoconference

Program manager **Carl Fleischhauer** and **Judy Graves** of the Library's Digital Reference Team participated in a June conference at the State Department to discuss the Library's digital initiatives, such as the American Memory Web site and NDIIPP. This videoconference included about 25 Polish librarians in Krakow. The librarians were so interested in the Library's programs that the videoconference had to be extended for 30 minutes.

This was the second consecutive year that the Library was asked to participate in this conference. Last year, Guy Lamolinara represented the Library.

NDIIPP Program Manager Attends Digital Preservation Workshop

Another NDIIPP program manager, **Babak Hamidzadeh**, attended a digital preservation workshop on June 23-25. This was part of the InterPARES project, which is a multinational, multi-institution and multidisciplinary project dedicated to the preservation of authentic digital content from artistic, scientific and governmental domains.

Hamidzadeh is a member of the international management team, the chair of a working group on appraisal and preservation of scientific records and a member of a group that has developed data models for the

preservation of digital materials through their lifecycle.

The management team oversees case studies in preservation in different domains. The management team has developed methodologies for analysis of the case study results and reviewed the status of case studies during this workshop. As part of the case study analysis methodology, the researchers will specify the digital objects and their elements and characteristics. They will also identify how appraisal of digital objects for preservation is performed. In addition to identifying existing preservation plans andpractices in each case study, the researchers will recommend alternative or complementary steps to be taken for the long-term preservation of digital objects. This will include recommendations on auxiliary digital objects to preserve in association with the primary digital objects, in order to support preservation.

The modeling group completed a detailed activity model (called a "Chain of Preservation" model) that integrates appraisal and preservation activities. The group will now focus on another modeling exercise that includes activities of the creator as part of the preservation lifecycle.

The description group is in the process of producing a metadata and archival description registry and analysis system. This system will track and analyze existing and emerging records-keeping metadata.

A book (external link) that reports the activities and results during the first phase of the project is now available.

Meetings in Europe

Stephen Griffin of the National Science Foundation, who just completed a yearlong detail with the Library, traveled to Europe in May for several important meetings.

He attended the CNI-JISC-SURF Conference on "Making the Strategic Case For Institutional Repositories," sponsored by the Netherlands Academy of Sciences and Arts. SURF (external link) is the Dutch higher education and research partnership organization for network services and information and communications technology. CNI (external link) is the Coalition for Networked Information, and JISC (external link) is the Joint Information Systems Committee in the United Kingdom.

According to Griffin, there was general consensus on the value and inevitability of a global network of institutional repositories – the value of such a resource is widely acknowledged. The key challenges to this evolving smoothly and quickly were not seen as technical issues - ideas on architectures, protocols and content descriptors are converging rapidly. The key challenges were the social and policy issues. For the repository network to grow, for example, authors must contribute their research papers and other content to them.

Griffin also participated in a seminar on NDIIPP at the Digital Curation Centre (external link) in Edinburgh, Scotland. The Digital Curation Centre is part of the JISC Digital Preservation and Records Management Program and supports British institutions in their efforts to store, manage and preserve data. The DCC also provides a national focus for research into curation issues and promotes expertise and good practice, both national and international, for the management of all research outputs in digital format.

The Oxford Internet Institute (OII) (external link) invited Griffin as a visiting scholar for four days of meetings with a diverse group of scholars and information technologists. OII is one of the first multidisciplinary Internet

institutes based at a major university. "Devoted to the study of the societal implications of the Internet, the OII seeks to shape research, policy and practice in the United Kingdom, Europe and around the world."

Griffin presented a 90-minute seminar on May 17 called "Digital Content and Cyberinfrastructure." The well-attended seminar included a former member of Parliament, who is also associated with OII, as well as Ted Nelson, the creator of the term hypertext.

NDIIPP Presents at International Association of Social Science Information Service & Technology (IASSIST)

Program manager **Caroline Arms** attended the 2005 IASSIST on May 24-27 in Edinburgh.

The conference attracted about 200 attendees from about 30 countries. Several of the partners in NDIIPP that are focusing on preservation of social science survey datasets (based at ICPSR, University of Michigan) were represented. Also there was Steve Morris, of North Carolina State University, whose NDIIPP project focuses on geospatial information. In addition, staff of the National Archives, the Federal Reserve, U.S. Department of Agriculture and the World Bank attended.

Some members of this community have been in the business of preserving (in the sense of ensuring continuing access to) data for decades. What is new for them is providing interactive online access and serving nonspecialist users. The traditional delivery method for data to researchers has been as complete data files, with the expectation being that researchers would use the analysis software of their choice. Increasingly, datasets are being transformed and made available through systems that support simple online analysis and extraction of subsets for downloading.

Arms's presentation was part of a session on "National Initiatives in Coordinating Preservation: Working Together." She began with an explanation of the eight NDIIPP partnerships awarded in September 2004 and also gave details of other NDIIPP activities.

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