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ARCHIVES ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO AWARDS - 2021

The AAO Awards Committee – consisting of Jean Dryden, Matt Szybalski, David Sharron, and Rodney Carter – were pleased and honoured to announce the winners of the 2021 AAO Awards at the AAO’s Annual General Meeting held on May 14th, 2021.

AAO EMERGING LEADER AWARD

The Emerging Leader Award was created in 2018 to mark the 25th anniversary of the Association. The award recognizes early-career archivists (who have been in the profession between two and ten years), whose work and service demonstrate consistent growth, leadership, and promise to the archives profession in Ontario. Achievements may include involvement in professional organizations, and/or participation in relevant projects, and/or written and scholarly work. This award is intended to recognize cumulative contributions rather than any single activity.

AAO EMERGING LEADER AWARD – AMANDA OLIVER

The first AAO Emerging Leader Award for 2021 was presented to Amanda Oliver.

Amanda earned her Masters of Library and Information Science (Archives Concentration) from McGill University in 2012 and in 2013 was hired by the Western University Archives as a General Archivist for a one-year term. She then moved to Alberta, where she served as Lead Archivist for the Archives Society of Alberta's Flood Advisory Programme from 2014-2016, before returning to Western as an Assistant Archivist, being promoted to Associate Archivist in 2018.

Despite being a relatively new professional, when Amanda returned to Western in 2016 she was entrusted with processing and providing access to the Labatt Brewing Company fonds, Western’s largest and arguably most significant fonds, and also



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managing the day to day relationship with the donor. Amanda readily embraced the challenge of dealing with the fonds, and taking a user-focused approach to provide access to its most important contents.

The highlight of this work was the launch of a very successful virtual exhibit which saw Amanda expertly undertaking all the archival work associated with its design, development, and launch while deftly managing the political relationships among the three major contributors and the external partners involved in the project. She did so with a high level of skill, confidence, and patience.

In her short career, Amanda has undertaken a significant amount of scholarly activity. She has authored or co-authored articles that have been published in *Archives and Manuscripts*, *Archival Issues*, the *Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies*, and the *Records Management Journal* and has presented over a dozen times at conferences including the annual conferences of the AAO, the Association of Canadian Archivists, the Society of American Archivists, the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, and at the Archives Society of Alberta Biennial Conference. While working at Western, Amanda completed a Master of Arts (with distinction) of Preventive Conservation from Northumbria University in 2020.

Additionally, Amanda has been an active member of the archival community, serving on the AAO's Preservation Committee and as a member of the Association of Canadian Archivists' Professional Development Committee, the Conference Program Team, volunteers as a mentor in the ACA's Mentorship Program, and she is a member of CARL's Canadian Web Archiving Coalition.

In the words of her nominator, "As her career has progressed Amanda has developed into a very effective leader in formal and informal settings, internally at



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Western and in the professional community. She has a quiet, calm, positive and practical outlook and carries out her responsibilities in a very professional yet very personable fashion, drawing on both her formal education and her various experiences to achieve success.”

The AAO is pleased to present Amanda Oliver with the AAO Emerging Leader Award in 2021 for her impressive professional and scholarly work, her demonstrated leadership, and her active participation in the professional archival community.

AAO EMERGING LEADER AWARD – JOSHUA KLAR

The second AAO Emerging Leader Award for 2021 was presented to Joshua Klar.

Joshua graduated in 2015 from Western University’s Master of Library and Information Science with a concentration in Archives and Records Management and began working at the City of Thunder Bay Archives as an Archives Assistant before becoming Associate Archivist. In June 2018, he joined the Corporation of Norfolk County as the County’s first archivist. In this role, he facilitated the establishment of a municipal archives facility and is responsible for the management of its operations.

In his first year as the Archivist for Norfolk County, Joshua planned and oversaw the renovation of a historic building which previously served as a museum into an archival facility, developed policies and procedures, identified and facilitated the transfer of several archival collections stored throughout the municipality, and created finding aids for these. More recently, he has secured major private archival donations including that of the local newspaper, the Simcoe Reformer.



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Joshua works collaboratively with the Norfolk County Records Management team and the County Clerk's office. In addition to managing the archives, he is also responsible for managing the staff of the Eva Brook Donly Museum and he has developed and manages a volunteer programme at the Archives. In November 2020, Norfolk County's Council approved an Archives Establishment by-law officially creating the municipal archives and approving its mandate. This milestone was achieved primarily through Josh's efforts.

Joshua has engaged in a great deal of outreach in his short time in Norfolk County, being an invited guest speaker to a variety of local organizations speaking about the Norfolk County Archives and archival work in general and he also developed and hosted a new annual event, the Norfolk County Genealogical Symposium. Additionally, he has presented at a number of AAO and other professional conferences. Joshua has also been instrumental in the revival of the AAO's Southwestern Ontario Chapter, which had been inactive for a number of years, serving as the president since November 2020.

According to his nominator, "Josh has quickly become a well-respected member of the Norfolk County Heritage & Culture team and has earned the trust of the community at large. He is generous in sharing his knowledge and expertise with others. He is very much a team player ... [His] professionalism, positive attitude, sense of humour and thoughtful intelligence makes him an extraordinary emerging leader in the field of archives."

The AAO is pleased to present the Emerging Leader Award to Joshua Klar in recognition of his work in establishing and managing the Norfolk County Archives, his community outreach efforts, and for his active participation in Archives Association of Ontario.



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AAO EMERGING LEADER AWARD – KATRINA COHEN-PALACIOS

The AAO is pleased to announce that the third Emerging Leader Award for the year was presented to Katrina Cohen-Palacios.

Katrina, a graduate of the University of Toronto's Faculty of Information, joined York University's Clara Thomas Archives and Special Collection in 2017 as an Adjunct Archivist, becoming the Media Archivist in 2019, and promoted to Archivist in 2020. Her work and contributions as an archivist at York University is described as exemplary not only in its collaborative nature but also for its outreach impact. Katrina has made important contributions in the discourse and workflows related to Canadian archives and linked data, an emerging area of archival outreach and collaboration. She also has played a key role in the Home Made Visible project, a collaboration of the Regent Park Film Festival, Charles Street Videos, and York University Libraries, which preserves and celebrates the important memories captured in home movies created by members of Indigenous, Black, and people of colour communities in Canada. This project was awarded the Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Award for Excellence in Conservation in 2020 and was also shortlisted for the Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Community Programming.

Katrina has presented at library and archival conferences across Canada and has been involved in various national and local professional organizations since 2013, serving on numerous committees and leadership positions within the Archives Association of Ontario (AAO) and the Toronto Area Archivists Group (TAAG), including as Chair of AAO's Professional Development Committee (PDC) since June 2019 and on the 2021 AAO Conference Programme Committee. Since 2013, Katrina



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has served as a mentor in the Association of Canadian Archivists' Mentorship Programme. Additionally, she has served, formally and informally, as a mentor for new professionals and for archival students, particularly at UofT's iSchool. Her nominators highlighted the important to the role her mentorship has had. One wrote, "Katrina can always be depended on to share her expertise, knowledge, and advice as an established archival professional. Above and beyond all this, Katrina extends a great deal of care to those new in the profession. It is integral that racialized young professionals and students have other racialized leaders that can champion them through the early stages of their career. Katrina is an ideal example of this vital role model."

For her professional and scholarly work, service to archival associations, and in recognition of the key role she has played as a mentor to racialized colleagues, the AAO is pleased to present the Emerging Leader Award to Katrina Cohen-Palacios.

ALEXANDER FRASER AWARD – GRANT HURLEY

Named after the first Archivist of Ontario, the Alexander Fraser Award is given to individuals who have contributed in a significant way to the advancement of the archival community in Ontario. Achievements may range from written and visual work to involvement in organizations or participation in projects. This award is designated to recognize cumulative contributions rather than any single activity. Generally speaking, contributions need to go beyond a specific archives or community.

The 2021 Alexander Fraser Award was presented to Grant Hurley.

Grant completed a Master's degree in English from the University of British Columbia in 2012 and then went on to earn a dual Master's of Archival Studies and



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Library and Information Science from UBC in 2015. After completing his studies, Grant moved to Toronto where he worked for a year as a Records Analyst/Archivist for The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario before assuming his current role of Digital Preservation Librarian for Scholars Portal at the Ontario Council of University Libraries/University of Toronto in August of 2016.

Since 2015, Grant has, in the words of his nominator, “set an impossibly high bar for service to the professional community.” He quickly became an integral member of the archival community in Ontario, serving in many roles in professional organizations, often concurrently.

Grant joined the Board of the Archives Association of Ontario in 2015, serving as Director Without Portfolio, while also taking on the role of editor of the association’s newsletter *Off the Record*. He served as Board Liaison to the Communications and Advocacy Committee and the Professional Development Committee and as member of the Student Outreach Committee, the Fundraising Committee, and, most recently, the Digital Preservation and Access Committee.

In addition to his work with the AAO, Grant has been a member of the Association of Canadian Archivists Conference Program team in 2019-2020 and is chairing the committee for the 2021 conference. He also serves as the ACA’s representative to the Canadian General Standards Board Committee on Electronic Records and Image Management. Since 2017, Grant has also worked on several committees of the Canadian Association of Research Libraries.

Beyond his extraordinary professional service, Grant’s nominator calls special attention to his “multifaceted involvement in increasing professional capacity in the field of digital preservation.”



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Grant has shared his knowledge of digital preservation in multiple forms: he has lead numerous workshops; organized and participated in panel discussions and webinars; taught courses and guest lectured at the University of Toronto as well as lecturing at Lakehead, McGill, and Ryerson Universities; and delivered more than a dozen presentations and posters at conferences across Canada as well as in the US, Norway, New Zealand, Scotland, Mexico, and the Netherlands. Since 2011, Grant has published exceptional scholarly work, authoring four articles, one of which won Archivaria's Gordon Dodds Prize for 2016; three book chapters, and he has co-authored five reports on digital preservation. As his nominator writes, "It may be near impossible to count the number of individuals whose knowledge of digital preservation has directly or indirectly benefited thanks to [Grant's] engagement with the community."

For his dedicated service to the archival community in Ontario and his tireless efforts in sharing his knowledge and passion for digital preservation, the Archives Association of Ontario is pleased to present Grant Hurley with the Alexander Fraser Award.

JAMES J. TALMAN AWARD – MARY GRACE KOSTA

The James J. Talman Award was named after the second Archivist of Ontario, who served from 1935 to 1939. He subsequently served as Chief Librarian for the University of Western Ontario until 1969. The Award is given to individuals who have demonstrated an outstanding level of imagination and innovation in contributing to the profession, their institution, or the archival community, or who have challenged conventional thinking about archival work.



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This year, the Talman Award was presented to Mary Grace Kosta for her work developing the student practicum program at the Archives of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph and with which she has demonstrated an outstanding level of imagination and innovation in supporting new members of the archival profession.

Mary started the student practicum program in 2012, shortly after she was hired as the first professionally trained lay Congregational Archivist. Initially, it was a standard volunteer program but, over time, Mary sensed there was the potential to help address an unmet need in the London community, particularly from Western University, for opportunities for students interested in working in archives to gain practical experience.

With the Sisters' approval, Mary expanded and formalized the volunteer program. Through her perseverance, vision, leadership, and creative use of limited resources she transformed it into a structured student practicum program, with a standard syllabus presented each term. Today the Congregation's student practicum program provides archival studies students - mostly from Western's Faculty of Information and Media Studies but others have come from Western's Public History Program and Mohawk College's Library Technician Program - with basic training and practical experience with core archival functions including preservation, arrangement and description, as well as digitization and digital preservation. Students may also have an opportunity to assist with reference questions or exhibit preparation and, additionally, Mary established a medical artefacts cataloguing option within the practicum where students learn basic museum registration skills.

The practicum program now has a formal application, interview and hiring process, followed by structured orientation and training supported by an orientation manual



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and a detailed processing manual which she has made publically available on the archives' website so other institutions can benefit from them. The student practicum program runs for a full four-month academic term with students normally committing three hours per week for a total of approximately 40 hours per term. While many students only participate for one term, others return for a second term to gain more experience.

Since its inception, over 100 students have benefitted from participating in the practicum program and from working with Mary to obtain the kind of experience that can often make the difference when applying for jobs after graduation. Many program "graduates" have gone on to work in the field in Ontario and beyond. In the words of her nominator, "from its rudimentary beginnings [...] the Congregational Archives student practicum has evolved to become today's formal, well-structured, and very successful program that provides students with the opportunity to obtain that all-important first practical work experience. It has helped many students gain professional employment and it serves as a model for other institutions. The development and success of the program are the direct result of Mary Kosta's sense of an unmet need, vision of what could be accomplished, and determination to make it a reality."

In recognition of her work and the outstanding level of imagination and innovation involved in supporting new members of the archival profession through the student practicum program at the Archives of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph the AAO is pleased to present Mary Grace Kosta with the James J. Talman Award.

AAO INSTITUTIONAL AWARD – ARNPRIOR & MCNAB/BRAESIDE ARCHIVES



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The AAO Institutional Award is given to an archival institution that has contributed significantly to the advancement of the archival field or community, or has demonstrated a significant level of innovation and imagination in the establishment of outstanding or model programs or services. Recognition may be granted for an individual project of particular merit or for a program that integrates many facets of archival enterprise.

The AAO is pleased announce the 2021 Institutional Award was presented to the Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives.

The history of Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives (AMBA) goes back to 1986, when a joint coordinating committee between the Arnprior and District Museum and the Arnprior and District Historical Society was formed with the purpose of establishing a community archives. It was formally incorporated as an independent, non-profit corporation in 1991 as the Arnprior and District Archives with a Board of Management consisting of representation from the three municipalities, the local museum, the Women's Institute, and members of the community. In 1993, the archives - an independent, volunteer organization dedicated to preserving and making accessible historically significant records of the community - opened within the local library. The name changed to Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives in 2007.

The advice of the Archives of Ontario's Archives Advisor and Preservation Consultant were sought in the early stages of its operation, enshrining proper archival practices into the organization from its inception. The level of professionalism in AMBA's operations is particularly noteworthy as it has always operated with a single, part-time archivist who is responsible for all volunteer training and supervision, research and reproduction services, processing, description, preservation, social media engagement and promotional activities.



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The Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives receives operation funding from the two municipal councils each year and the support of the respective councils of McNab/Braeside and Arnprior has grown dramatically over the years. However, AMBA has also been reliant on, and very successful in being awarded, grants to achieve its goals.

By strategically applying for available funds from provincial and federal sources, the Archives has been able to expand its archival storage; develop its website and upgrade it in stages, increasing its functionality and usability over time; create an electronic database of its archival holdings and then, later, host this database online and, again later, integrate digitized archival objects; digitize historic local newspapers; develop virtual exhibitions; and hire students to process archival collections.

Through the efforts of AMBA's dedicated volunteers – who provide around 3000 hours of service to the Archives annually – AMBA has been able to describe and make accessible its nearly 400 fonds, including thousands of photographs and over 500 maps; index birth, marriage, and death records; digitize local newspapers and Women's Institute records; and index over a century's worth of Renfrew County Land Records.

As one of the nominator wrote, AMBA is “an excellent example of what can be achieved by a small archives with limited funding” and, as another nominator stated, “the accomplishments of this volunteer organization over its 28 year history are truly outstanding.”



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In recognition of the extraordinary work of its archivists and volunteers and its continuous improvement over the years, the Archives Association of Ontario is pleased to present the Arnprior & McNab/Braeside Archives with the Institutional Award.