

NEWSLETTER

NATIONAL COUNCIL on PUBLIC HISTORY

Vol. V, No. 2-No. 3 Spring-Summer 1985

Long-Range Planning Committee Report

A SUMMARY

At the 1984 Los Angeles meeting of the National Council on Public History, the then incoming chair, Jack Holl, appointed an ad hoc Long-Range Planning Committee to examine the purpose and nature of the organization. The Committee, chaired by Michael Scardaville (University of South Carolina), consisted of four other members: Shelly Bookspan (PHR Associates), Robert Pomeroy (Inter-American Development Bank), Glenda Riley (University of Northern Iowa), and Jack Holl, ex officio (U.S. Department of Energy). The committee submitted an extensive report to the executive committee and board of the NCPH at the 1985 meeting in Phoenix where it was decided to summarize its major conclusions to the membership of the organization through the newsletter. For a copy of the entire report, write Barbara Howe, Executive Secretary, NCPH, Department of History, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV 26506. (Please include \$1.00 to defray postal expenses.)

The report is designed not as a blueprint for the future or a development plan, but rather as a catalyst for promoting discussion of fundamental issues concerning the nature, structure, and mission of the NCPH. The recommendations made by the committee are open-ended, and in certain instances several approaches or strategies are offered to address a particular problem. The recommendations, therefore, should not be viewed as binding; we hope they will encourage debate and subsequent action on the part of the board, executive committee, and members. Several key recommendations will require further study while others could be implemented in the coming year. The following recommendations, which fall into six principal categories, are based on an assessment and critique of the organization conducted by the Long-Range Planning Committee. See the full report for a complete presentation and discussion of all the recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Mission and Purpose

1. Retain basic objectives stated in Bylaws, but broaden one objective to include the promotion of history, not merely public history.

The Bylaws of the NCPH delineate five basic objectives: (1) promote an appreciation of public history; (2) represent groups that practice public history; (3) support public historians; (4) coordinate professional activities; and (5) provide appropriate services. With one exception, these objectives should not preclude flexibility and creativity in defining and designing projects and programs to serve the varied interests of the membership. The Council should concentrate its energies on identifying and implementing activities to accomplish these broadly based objectives. The NCPH, however, confines itself by merely promoting the practice of public history, an approach which defines this objective too narrowly and limits the potential of the organization. The Council should promote the practice of history, not just public history. The NCPH should be addressing the practice of history in different settings for a variety of audiences. By embracing a broader mandate, the Council will have a wider appeal as an organization dedicated to those who are engaged in the historical process and to those who could benefit from the services of such historians.

A related consideration is that the Council should consider changing its name to reflect its expanded mission and broaden its appeal within and outside the historical profession. A way to build upon the earlier efforts and successes of the Council and maintain part of its identity is to adopt a name that will enable the organization to keep the acronym of

REPORT ENDORSED

Copies Available

At its April meeting in Phoenix, the board enthusiastically accepted the accompanying long-range planning committee report. Board members made this committee a regular committee of the Council and directed it to continue working.

The report suggests several important changes, from restructuring the makeup of the Council to more clearly identifying its goals and targeting specific areas for action. Because of the importance of this report to the future of the Council and its work, this Newsletter contains a summary of the report's most important features.

Michael Scardaville, who chaired the committee, prepared the summary for the Newsletter. Comments are invited and may be sent to him: Department of History, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208. Other members of the committee include Scardaville as chair, Shelley Bookspan, Arnita Jones, Glenda Riley, Michael Schene, and David Trask.

For a complete copy of the report send \$1.00 (to cover postage) to Barbara J. Howe, Executive Secretary, Department of History, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV 26506.

At its May meeting the Executive Committee reviewed several areas of the report. Several new committees have been appointed to begin working in new areas: Cultural Resource Management (chair, Stanley Hordes); Ethics and Professional Standards (chair, Ruth Ann Overbeck); Professional Issues (chair, Melvin Smith); Public Information (chair, Martin Melosi). In addition, a Newsletter support committee (chair, Anne Kaplan) is now functioning to broaden the focus of the Newsletter. The Executive Committee will meet the first weekend in October to take up further issues and will consider ideas on Council structure and governance. Recommendations will be made to the board at its December meeting.

NCPH. Any name change should be viewed not as a rejection of the early years of the Council, but rather as a reflection of the evolving and expanding nature of what constitutes the practice of history.

B. Promotion of History

1. Sponsor activities and programs to promote the application of history and the use of historians in society.

The purpose of the promotional activities listed below is to get the public to view historians as nonteachers, as professionals who can participate and contribute to a wide range of seemingly nonhistorical activities. The NCPH has to make a case for the utility of history, a statement that no other historical organization is aggressively making.

2. Sponsor seminars and workshops beyond the historical community.

These seminars and workshops, stressing the value of history, should be process-oriented, emphasizing problem-solving, communications, and information management at a minimum. Specific topics, for example, could deal with policy development, records management, cultural resource management, and corporate and public planning. Such programs could be sponsored solely by the NCPH or offered under the joint auspices of existing organizations such as the American Management Association or the American Planning Association. Seminars and workshops could also be conducted prior to the opening of meetings of the NCPH and other historical organizations.

3. Sponsor intensive training institutes for the different constituencies of the organization.

These educational opportunities should appeal to different levels of professionals (recent converts to long-standing public historians) and to specific constituencies (cultural resource management specialists or planning and policy analysts).

4. Initiate a series of popular essays for public consumption.

Such writings would essentially be show-and-tell pieces that stress the value of the historical process. Although many members of the NCPH are tired of this type of promotion, there is still a place for it outside the Council's publications and annual meetings. The NCPH needs to sell the notion that history can be and has been useful in many different situations. And it must stop promoting this solely to an academic audience.

5. Establish joint projects and activities with other historical organizations.

The promotion of history should not be directed solely at nonhistorians, but also within the historical profession, both aca-

demical and public, including the AHA, OAH, SAA, AASLH, NTHP, NCC, and the Society for History in the Federal Government.

C. Membership

1. Undertake a membership drive and develop appropriate strategies.

The Council needs to expand its revenue base as well as generate broader support for the organization. In addition to recruiting members from other historical organizations, the Council needs to adopt strategies that will identify and broaden its constituencies. Any membership drive should be coordinated by the Executive Secretary with possible support from state membership chairs.

2. Increase membership by offering more tangible and specific services.

Increasing membership depends on improving and expanding the services of the NCPH. The organization must be able to show that it has been engaged in activities and has sponsored programs that are in the best interests of current and potential members. More specific and tangible services are needed as well, including benefit packages for independent historians, published directories of public historians and consultants, job placement services, and a journal and newsletter that better meet the needs of the members.

3. Review the dues structure to determine the adequacy of current dues and the institutional membership category.

Before a membership drive can be undertaken, the dues structure of the organization should be reviewed to determine whether current dues are adequate given the services rendered and whether they need to be increased if the level of Council activity increases. In addition, the institutional membership category should be continued if the Council begins to sponsor and expand activities which would benefit corporations, state historical agencies, consulting firms, and departments of history.

D. Governance

1. Undertake a major structural reform of the organization to address the inability to identify and deliver services.

The administrative format of the NCPH has not been conducive to identifying and delivering services. Through a major structural reform, the Council needs to depersonalize, decentralize, and institutionalize its operations. The recent establishment of the secretariat represents the first concrete step in this process.

2. Restructure the Board of Directors and clearly define its role and duties.

The Council underwent a change in structure when it became a membership organization, but there has been no corresponding change in its governance. The present Council format has not been effective since the early, innovative years of the organization, and, as currently constituted, it is not the most productive approach to govern a professional membership society. A modest revision would be to reduce the number of board members and clearly define their role and duties. The Council should review how other professional membership organizations have structured the relationship between the executive committee and board of directors. The most immediate implication of restructuring the board is the possible elimination or reduction of a consistent source of revenue. The Council must be able to find ways to offset this loss of a steady financial base.

3. Establish Professional Affinity Groups or related committees to decentralize and institutionalize the operations of the organization and broaden participation of the membership.

The Council should consider becoming more of an umbrella-type of organization, a federated body with greater responsibility given to Professional Affinity Groups (PAGs) or less formalized committees that represent well-defined constituent groups within the organization, such as CRM, planning and policy analysis, museums, and archives and information management. The PAGs or comparable committees should play a critical role in the development and operation of the Council. They should be responsible for a wide range of activities, including undertaking a needs assessment for their constituency, determining appropriate services and activities, identifying funding sources for projects, assisting in gathering information for the newsletter and in proposing sessions for the annual meeting, and testifying on professional issues that affect the practice of history. In this organizational scheme, the executive committee should provide the overall coordination of the varied Council activities and programs.

The restructuring of the board and establishment of PAGs or comparable committees should broaden participation in the organization by decentralizing policy and program development. A revised administrative structure, as proposed, is more reflective of a grassroots approach, with more of the ideas and programs generated below by historians in particular areas of public history.

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Long Range Planning

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4. **Employ a part-time or full-time staff person to provide stable and long-term support of programs and activities.**

The maximum potential of the organization will not be met until the NCPH employs a staff person on either a part- or full-time basis. Although the Secretariat represents an important step in the consolidation and coordination of Council work, there are certain limitations to what it can accomplish. Its clearinghouse and centralization functions can be done on a part-time volunteer basis, but it does not provide the consistent, steady presence that is needed for certain kinds of activities. A staff person would enhance the Council's accomplishments in working with other organizations, attending other conferences, developing grants, conducting membership drives, undertaking fund-raising activities, and coordinating and implementing seminars and workshops. Volunteers can only do so much in building an organization. Serious thought should be given to finding ways to support a paid staff person.

E. Conference

1. **Continue holding the conference annually, but move the date to another, less crowded, time of the year.**

The annual conference has been one of the most successful activities of the Council. It provides an intellectual forum for those engaged in the practice of public history, brings together the organization's diverse membership, and serves as a potential money-making activity as well as an opportunity to recruit new members to the organization. It is possible, however, that its fullest potential has not been realized because of the time of the year in which the meeting is normally held. April is a busy month for many historians who attend not only other national meetings (such as the OAH), but also local and state conferences. The Council should consider moving the date of the annual meeting to another time of the year when the calendar is not so crowded, possibly in the summer or late winter (late February or early March).

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National Council on Public History

ETHICAL GUIDELINES

I. Historian's Relationship to Sources

- A. Historians work for the preservation, care, and accessibility of the historic record. The unity and integrity of historical record collections are the basis for interpreting the past.
- B. Historians owe to their sources accurate reportage of all information relevant to the subject at hand.
- C. Historians favor free and open access to historical research collections subject to the constraints of law and standard procedures of archives and records management.

II. Historians' Relationship to Clients (Employers)

- A. Historians owe their employers the historical truth insofar as it can be determined from available sources.
- B. Historians at all times respect the confidentiality of clients, employers, and students. Information gained through a professional relationship must be held inviolate, except when required by law, court, or administrative order.
- C. Historians seek to perform professional quality work in accordance with their employment agreements or research contracts.

III. Historians' Relationship with Colleagues

- A. Historians share knowledge and experience with other historians through professional activities and assist the professional growth of others with less training or experience.
- B. Historians handle all matters of personnel, including hiring, promoting, pay adjustments and discipline, on the basis of merit without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, physical handicap, age, or marital status.
- C. When applying for employment or awards, historians submit applications and letters of recommendation which are accurate as to all pertinent details of education, experience, and accomplishment.
- D. Historians give appropriate credit for work done by others.

IV. Historians' Relationship with the Community

- A. Historians serve as advocates to protect the community's historical resources.
- B. Historians work to promote a greater awareness of and appreciation for history in schools, business, voluntary organizations, and the community at large.
- C. Historians represent historical research to the public in a responsible manner and should serve as advocates of economic or political interests only when such a position is consistent with objective historical truth.

V. Historians' Responsibility to the Canons of History

- A. Historians are dedicated to truth. Flagrant manifestations of prejudice, distortions of data, or the use of deliberately misleading interpretations are anathema.
- B. Historians in their work represent the past in all of its complexity.

Adopted April 1985

Important Upcoming Dates

- September 1: ● Sponsor dues deadline
- September 15: ● Reports and agenda items due for Executive Committee meeting
- October 4-6: ● Executive Committee meeting, Washington, DC
- November 1: ● Suggestions for new board members and officers due in Executive Secretary's office
- December 1: ● Nominating Committee report due
- Agenda items for the New York meetings of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors due
- December 28-30: ● Executive Committee and Board of Directors meetings in New York at the American Historical Association meeting
- March 15: ● Reports and agenda items for the New York meetings of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors due
- April 10-13: ● Joint meeting of NCPH and the Organization of American Historians, New York

Information about the work of the Council and its activities may be obtained from the Executive Secretary, Barbara J. Howe, Department of History, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV 26506

Long Range Planning

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F. Implementation

1. **Appoint a standing planning committee to oversee the implementation of the report and ongoing evaluations of programs and activities.**

A planning committee would have the responsibility of implementing the report, undertaking any intensive studies of issues and recommendations, and conducting periodic assessments of the effectiveness of

activities and programs of the Council.

Board Action at Phoenix

The Board of Directors unanimously accepted the report and formally established a standing Long-Range Planning Committee to undertake further studies and make specific recommendations concerning governance and funding by October 1, 1985. The committee, chaired by Scardaville, will canvass current and past board members to determine opinions about these interrelated matters.

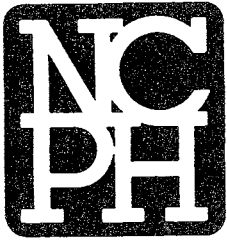
Comments Encouraged from the Membership

Any comments concerning the report of the Long-Range Planning Committee and other related matters should be directed to Michael Scardaville, Department of History, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208/(803) 777-7611.

The *Newsletter* of the National Council on Public History is published four times each year. Coeditors of the *NCPH Newsletter* are Beth Luey and Noel Stowe of Arizona State University. Copy for the next *Newsletter* should be sent to NCPH Newsletter, Department of History, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV 26506.

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Annual Report, 1984-85

National Council on Public History

Our seventh annual conference was one of the most successful of our yearly gatherings. In Phoenix we joined forces with the Southwest Oral History Association, Public Works Historical Society Board of Trustees and the Coordinating Committee for History in Arizona from April 25-27 to explore concerns in oral history, editing, public works history, cultural resource management, current public policy, and so on. We toured Tempe for our first "off-campus" sessions where participants from the 1985 Summer Institute on Teaching Public History presented their work. Tours of downtown Phoenix and a Mexican buffet at Phoenix's Lath House, accompanied by tours of buildings in Heritage Square, also highlighted the meeting. We began with a reception on Wednesday evening, April 24, and ended with our annual banquet on Saturday evening that featured Congressman Bruce Vento (D-Minnesota) as our speaker. Representative Vento chairs the National Parks and Recreation Subcommittee, the second largest subcommittee of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee.

Summer Institute

Two major events dominated the NCPH agenda for 1984-85. With funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, thirty college teachers from around the country converged on Tempe during July to work with five NCPH faculty (G. Wesley Johnson, Patricia Mooney Melvin, Anna Nelson, Michael C. Scardaville, and Noel Stowe), exploring aspects of public history and methods for bringing this knowledge into the classroom. Representing a broad range of colleges and interests, participants broke into three workshop groups—local and community history, cultural resource management, and business/public policy—to develop projects that would teach them the basics of these aspects of public history. Some specific group projects included plans for the adaptive use of a circa 1900 warehouse, rescue and documentation efforts for an about-to-be-demolished house, an assessment of potential banking deregulation legislation, and a look at the development of professional groups in Arizona. Tours of historic sites in Arizona, including an infamous 8 a.m. "death march" tour of

territorial Tempe in 100+ degree heat, complemented the institute. A major highlight was an outdoor steak dinner in Sedona, following a day of activities in Prescott and Jerome. Guest speakers from around the country also took part in the seminar program.

The institute has had many positive results. The faculty, and all NCPH "veterans," were gratified to see seminar participants in such prominence at our annual meeting, giving papers, and becoming members of the board of directors. In all, half the institute participants returned for the conference. If one goal was to widen the circle of NCPH "activists," the Tempe institute was a success. New courses are being introduced around the country, and more people are becoming aware of public history and the Council. A summary of the institute appeared in the fall issue of the *NCPH Newsletter*.

The Public Historian Contract

The second major event of the year was the negotiation of a contract between the University of California, Santa Barbara, and NCPH for the cosponsorship and editing of our journal, *The Public Historian*. NCPH began as most organizations do, as a group of individuals who separately worked to accomplish their goals. Last year, it became clear that we needed to formalize our relationships with UCSB, establish joint copyright and joint sponsorship, and set the course for broader national participation in the journal. Under the agreement (signed in April), NCPH and UCSB will jointly appoint the editor of the journal, and NCPH will establish the editorial board. As the year ends, the executive committee is establishing procedures to appoint the editor and editorial board and then, with UCSB, will negotiate a contract with the University of California Press for continued publication. Although this may seem a routine matter, it has provided an opportunity for NCPH to look at its structure and future with great care.

We thank those who worked so hard to successfully conclude this agreement: Chair Jack Holl, Vice Chair Noel Stowe, UCSB Provost David Sprecher, UCSB History Department Chair W. Elliott Brownlee, and *The Public Historian* editor G. Wesley

Johnson. We thank the members of an ad hoc committee who explored various aspects of the contract for us: Richard Kirkendall, chair; Sharon Gibbs-Thibodeau, John Ryden, and Michael Scardaville.

Long-Range Planning Committee

With our contract negotiations well under control and our executive secretariat established at West Virginia University to provide a clearing-house for NCPH activities, NCPH is looking to the future. Our long-range planning committee (Michael Scardaville, chair; Shelley Bookspan, Robert Pomeroy, Glenda Riley, and Jack Holl [ex-officio]) has prepared a detailed report, outlining our options for organization and services to members. The board approved the committee's report at its April meeting and directed the executive committee to determine ways to implement several of the recommendations, particularly examining the composition of our board and our financial structure. We hope that by next year's annual meeting we can report substantial steps toward the implementation of our most important goal—making NCPH truly a membership organization. A summary of the report is included in the spring-summer issue of the *NCPH Newsletter*.

Services for Students and Teachers

Our major "product" for the year was a guide to departments of history offering courses in public history. "What schools offer public history programs?" is one of our most common questions, and the 1982 guide published by the University of California, Santa Barbara, is both out of date and out of print. We sent a survey to the 1,800 institutions on the American Historical Association's institutional mailing list and received information on programs at 76 schools. This information has been computerized and will be available by the end of 1985 from the executive secretary at a cost of \$10. The Curriculum and Training Committee, under the direction of Chair Pat Melvin, worked on the survey, with help from WVU public history student

Billy Joe Peyton and public history secretary Jina Secreto. Al Hurtado, incoming chair of the Curriculum and Training Committee, will see this booklet through to completion.

As a result of our survey, we have had numerous requests for copies of our syllabi of public history programs, filling about 125 requests for syllabi in the past year, about 100 more requests than last year. We continue to offer the syllabus exchange as a free program, and encourage anyone teaching public history courses to write for copies. The survey also helped us generate increased interest in our "History Goes Public" slide tape show. We have sold eight copies of the show this year and have had orders for eleven rentals; in comparison, we had three rentals and three purchases last year. We expect sales and rentals to produce about \$1000 for NCPH this fiscal year, including income from these rentals and sales filtering in after June 1. In fact, we have ordered two "re-prints" of the slide show and are investigating ways to put it on videotape to make it easier to circulate.

Publications

As part of our publications program, Beth Luey and Noel Stowe continued to edit our newsletter from Arizona State University this year and will continue through the summer 1985 issue. We distributed copies of the *NCPH Newsletter* at both the American Historical Association and Organization of American Historians' annual meetings. After that summer issue, we will be looking for a new home for the newsletter, but we do want to take this opportunity to thank Luey, Stowe, and the Department of History at ASU for their hard work on this project in the past few years. Unfortunately, we have found it necessary to discontinue the Teaching Public History Newsletter because we were having trouble generating enough copy and subscriptions to make it self-supporting; although many of the subscribers were not members of NCPH, we hope they will join NCPH and support the development of a regular teaching section in the *NCPH Newsletter*.

The Public Historian was published regularly, with a special issue on public history in Europe (Fall 1984). Other issues featured articles on topics as diverse as "The Ambiguous Legacy of American Presidential Commissions" by Hugh Davis Graham, "Cultural Resource Management in Australia's Northern Territory: Problems and Prospects" by David Carment, and "Visual History: The Craft of the Historian-Filmmaker" by Daniel J. Walkowitz. In addition to articles under the topics of "Research"

and "Issues and Analysis," the journal featured book reviews, media reviews, review essays, exhibit reviews, film reviews and novel reviews to accommodate the wide-ranging interests of public historians. We thank G. Wesley Johnson, Jr., journal editor; Lindsey Reed, associate editor; Rebecca McLeod, book review editor; and everyone else who contributed to the publication of the journal for their assistance in the past year.

We also received our first honorarium check to reflect sales of *The Craft of Public History* last fall and look forward to additional payments as the book becomes more widely known. We have continued to advertise this bibliography at all of our functions and at AHA and OAH meetings.

Committee Reports

At its April meeting, the board adopted an ethics statement developed over the past two years by the ethics committee, led by Ted Karamanski. This ad hoc committee has now been dissolved and will be replaced by a permanent ethics and professional standards committee that will work on developing links with the OAH and with the AHA's professional committee to explore the common ethical concerns of historians. Recent publicity on the ethics of historians in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* has made this a particularly timely topic. Our ethics statement is included elsewhere in this report.

We have also formed an archives committee this year which will set policies for the development of NCPH's archives and look for a repository for our growing number of records.

Cooperative Projects

We have cooperated with history activities outside NCPH, and are developing increasingly strong ties with other history organizations. Board member Brit Storey chaired the Organization of American Historians' public history committee during 1984-85 and invited several NCPH members to "testify" before his committee. Board member Page Putnam Miller has served admirably as executive director of the National Coordinating Committee for the Promotion of History, especially during the negotiations to ensure the independence of the National Archives. Several NCPH members have been meeting with Miller over the past year to determine ways to ensure a more effective history component in cultural resource management issues, and an official ad hoc NCPH committee will soon be appointed to work with her. Board member Deborah Gardner and Daniel Walkowitz have worked with

the OAH over the past year to develop a joint OAH-NCPH annual meeting in New York City in April 1986. We sponsored a session on military history at the AHA meeting in Chicago in December, and held our annual reception for public historians at the meeting.

Board Meetings

The board of directors of NCPH met at the AHA and NCPH meetings. The executive committee met at those meetings and at additional committee meetings in Chicago in October and Washington, DC, in May.

Welcome to the New, Farewell to the Old

We would like to express our appreciation to our outgoing officers: Jack M. Holl, chair; Noel Stowe, vice-chair; Barbara Howe, secretary; Ted Karamanski, treasurer; and Larry Tise, past chair. We would also like to thank our outgoing board members: Philip Cantelon, Suellen Hoy, Robert Pomeroy, James Reed, Karen Smith, Peter Steams, and David Trask. Many of them have served NCPH since its inception, and we will miss their active participation on the board.

Our new board will be led by the following officers: Noel Stowe, chair; Michael Scardaville, vice-chair; Patricia Mooney Melvin, secretary; and Albert Hurtado, treasurer. New members of the executive committee are Beth Grosvenor and Larry Hackman, replacing Scardaville and Melvin; Anna Nelson will continue on the executive committee. New board members elected to four-year terms are Cullom Davis, Larry Hackman, Stanley Hordes, Anne Kaplan, Martin Melosi, Paul Scheips, Daniel Walkowitz, and Jannelle Warren-Findley. Ray Brandes, Ruth Dudgeon, and Gerald Herman are filling other vacancies on the board.

I would like to close by extending thanks to all the board members for their cheerful cooperation during the past year, to all the members of NCPH who responded so willingly to requests for help, to Jina Secreto, my secretary at WVU who put in many hours on NCPH projects, and to Billy Joe Peyton, the NCPH work-study student and to the other work-study students at WVU who spent so many hours cheerfully photocopying, stuffing envelopes, and doing all the extra tasks needed to keep an organization going.

Barbara Howe
Executive Secretary

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