

**Reference, Access, and Outreach Section
National History Day Committee Report
August 13, 2010**

The Reference, Access, and Outreach Section charged the National History Day Committee in February 2010. The committee formed and divided into two working groups: the first, under co-chair Shaun Hayes, works directly with archivists; the second, led by co-chair Doris Malkmus, fosters coordination between archivists and affiliates of the National History Day office to meet these goals. As a preliminary, fact-finding first step, committee members of both working groups interviewed 36 state coordinators between May and July 2010, gathering information on existing communication networks between NHD state coordinators and teachers, students, and archivists; resources available and/or needed to promote and enhance the use of local archival resources; and what additional teaching tools and resources were most needed. NHD Committee members entered answers from the interviews into a survey tool and a summary of that data is attached to this report.

Analysis of the data revealed that NHD state coordinators are in close communication with teachers through email, mailings, and other publicity. Between a quarter and a third have a paid educator who works closely with NHD teachers and students. On the other hand, communication with local repositories in the state was thin and inconsistent and information about doing archival research was rare. For example, 5.6 percent of state Websites offered guidance about using finding aids, 44 percent had information about finding online primary sources, and only 55% included links to repositories.

Improved communication to archivists was high on the list of priorities. When asked what new resources and education tools they considered most desirable, most state coordinators selected an online Webinar for teachers on how to effectively research materials in repositories, followed by straightforward handouts for students about how to use primary sources. More outreach to archivists was a close third.

These interviews clearly point to a need for enhanced understanding and cooperation between archivists, K-12 teachers, and NHD coordinators in disseminating information about NHD and teaching the use of primary sources. Interviews identified specific tools and resources most desirable to support this cooperation. This assessment information provides evidence for future strategies and tasks, and can form the groundwork for funding requests for resource development.

The NHD Committees will use this information, just compiled, to strategize goals and objectives in accordance with the committee charge, and begin work on actions steps to enhance archivist participation in NHD and a more engaged relationship within NHD networks.