

depends very much on who is doing the hiring. As any glance through the SAA job postings will verify, it may be helpful in some settings, but it will be irrelevant in others. I would venture that even in many situations where certification is preferred, the quality of your cover letter and vita (overall)—as well as your coursework and experience—will be more significant than your certification status. But certainly, if the positions you find most attractive seem frequently to list certification as a preference, it would make sense to add that credential.

I am also often asked whether experience, in the form of a practicum, internship, or volunteer work, is important. In general, I would say that, yes, other qualities being roughly equal, a candidate with such experience will appear stronger than one without. However, experience processing family papers will not be a great selling point when applying for a position in a corporate archives as a reference and outreach specialist (or vice versa). Having a variety of experience is likely to be most helpful, although

most search committees are reasonably realistic about how much experience they can expect for an entry-level position.

Additionally, many prospective employees want to know whether a strong background in electronic records, digitization, or Web 2.0 is the key to landing that first job. Alas, like so many things, it depends, particularly with regard to the job for which one is applying. If the repository is trying to process a ten-year backlog of analog collections and needs a new archival processor, advanced skills with born digital material is not going to be critical. On the other hand, of two otherwise equally qualified candidates, the one with Web 2.0 experience may have an advantage. Plus, digital competency may just be the ticket to your SECOND job, and it's never too early to begin thinking that far ahead.

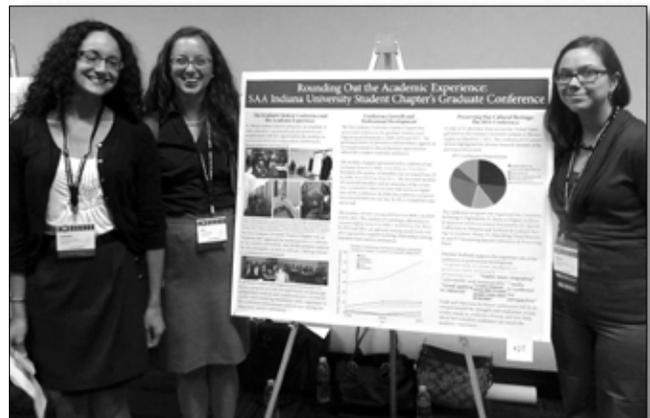
Indiana University Student SAA Members Blog Away Archives Month 2011

By Danielle Emerling, Indiana University—Bloomington School of Library and Information Science

To celebrate American Archives Month 2011, the Indiana University Society of American Archivists student chapter (SAA-SC) traveled to archival and historical institutions in southern Indiana and blogged about their Civil War collections. The purpose of the project was to bring the knowledge of these holdings to a broader audience through the use of the SAA-SC blog (<http://saaiu.wordpress.com/category/american-archives-month/>) and to encourage a greater appreciation of the materials held in these smaller institutions. In addition, the project provided students with experience in the areas of outreach and advocacy.

The first trip was to the John Hay Center in Salem, Indiana, where students blogged about records documenting Morgan's Raid, the only major Civil War action seen in the state. In the same trip, students visited the Depot Railroad Museum, which memorializes Salem's leading role in Indiana's railroad history, and is a replica of Salem's original train station, burned during Morgan's Raid. The following week, students made a trip to the Hanover College Archives Center in Hanover, Indiana, where they encountered a number of rare books, autograph books,

and enthralling stories in soldiers' letters to home. In their final trip, students discovered intimate historical artifacts, a certificate of service signed by Abraham Lincoln, and even a Union soldier's uniform.



Danielle Emerling (left), Amy Jankowski, and Heather Stone of Indiana University's SAA student chapter with their poster on August 26, 2011 at SAA.