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Regional Archivists Group Celebrates 40th Anniversary with Special Programs

Worcester (MA), March 21-23, 2013, New England Archivists (NEA) will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the organization with a special three-day meeting on the campus of the College of the Holy Cross. The program will feature a cross-section of subjects: DNA encoding for information storage, digital humanities, and Worcester history as told by its immigrant population in conjuction with the StoryCorps project.

About George Church

The plenary talk will be given by Dr. George Church, professor of genetics at Harvard Medical School, proponent of archival storage using DNA, and author of *Regenesis*—the first book to be encoded into DNA. In this talk Dr. Church will describe the process of using DNA for storing data and share new research on using organic matter to record data. Archivists, as custodians and preservers of cultural heritage, are at the forefront of the digital storage discussion, as more and more of the world's information is created—and preserved—electronically.

About Tom Scheinfeldt

The program will also include a keynote speech by Tom Scheinfeldt, digital humanities expert and Director-at-Large of the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media at George Mason University. Dr. Scheinfeldt has directed many award-winning projects, including THATCamp, Omeka, and the September 11 Digital Archive. His keynote address will focus on the emerging trend of digital humanities and archives.

About StoryCorps

StoryCorps, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to recording, preserving, and sharing the stories of people from all backgrounds and beliefs, will visit Worcester from March 21 to March 23, 2013. In an effort to engage the public around the importance of collecting and preserving history, NEA is partnering with the Worcester Historical Museum, the Worcester Women's Oral History Project, and Lutheran Social Services to work with StoryCorps to collect the oral histories of Worcester's immigrant community

Since 2003, StoryCorps has collected and archived interviews with more than 80,000 participants in all 50 states. Each conversation is recorded on a free CD to share, and is preserved at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. Segments of selected interviews may also air nationally on NPR's Morning Edition.

StoryCorps is one of the largest oral history projects of its kind. For the Worcester project the goal is to record the stories of 16 to 20 individuals over a three-day period. Participants will be given copies of the recordings, and duplicate copies will be deposited in the Worcester Historical Museum and the Library of Congress. This project received funding from Mass Humanities.

"Oral histories are an ideal medium for capturing and preserving the first-person recollection that we crave to inform our understanding of time and place," said Alyssa Pacy, incoming president of New England Archivists. "Our goal as archivists is to document the diverse communities in which we serve, and partnering with Worcester's vibrant immigrant community ensures all the voices from our community are present and heard. As New England Archivists celebrates its 40th anniversary, we are thrilled to engage the public around the importance of collecting and preserving local history."

About New England Archivists

Founded in 1973, New England Archivists is the premier professional organization in the field of archives and special collections in the New England region. Archivists are professionals who collect, arrange, describe, and provide access to historical documents. With approximately 600 members, the organization connects the archival community through meetings, workshops, and online resources. NEA facilitates professional development by offering a number of workshops and meetings per year.

NEA is committed to increasing public awareness of archival work and to informing historians, genealogists, students, and journalists, among others, about archival resources that might be of use to them. NEA also works with individuals in related professions, such as records managers, librarians, and town clerks, to promote the sharing of information among the larger community of information professionals.

For more information, please contact Lisa Feldmann at lfeldmann@isgm.org, or visit the New England Archivists website at www.newenglandarchivists.org. For more information on StoryCorps or to listen to previous interviews, please visit www.storycorps.org. Funding for this project was provided by Mass Humanities, which supports programs that use history, literature, philosophy, and the other humanities disciplines to enhance and improve civic life throughout Massachusetts. Visit Mass Humanities at www.masshumanities.org.

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