

To: H-Net Council  
From: Peter Knupfer, Executive Director  
Date: November 8, 2010  
Subject: Executive Director Annual Report

This report closes out a year of recovery as our organization works to stabilize its finances and migrate to new, stronger, and more flexible platforms.

We began the fiscal year with an improved revenue picture from the slow but noticeable increase in postings to our Job Guide, supported by welcome and vital assistance from the Department of History at Michigan State, for which we remain very grateful. By the end of the reporting period the Job Guide had brought in \$175,930, an increase of about \$8,300 over the previous fiscal year. We built up a small but useful cash reserve of \$61,890. It will be necessary to continue to strengthen that reserve to help tide us through economic troughs and incidental cost increases related to reprogramming our site. Having gone to our readers with an urgent appeal the previous year, we refrained from seeking direct donations during this fiscal year, concentrating instead on experimenting with a sponsorship program that attracted significant donations from the Organization of American Historians, Bedford St. Martin's, and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. It is evident that direct support from the Department of History, which has fiscal issues of its own to grapple with, cannot continue at its current level and that we must increase and diversify our revenues if we are to reach the objectives in our Strategic Plan, including the creation of a regular professional staff under the management of a paid executive director.

The listserv activity trends of the past few years continue. New subscribers join our discussion forums (146,609 unique addresses as of this writing, compared to 136,667 last year) and new networks apply to join our organization (186 networks exist as of this writing, the same as last year, with about two dozen new applicants awaiting processing), the number of outbound mail jobs continues to rise while the number of postings per month declines (from an average of 8,480 to 8,344). During the reporting period we certified 23 (21 last year) new advisory board members and 63 (74) new editors.

H-Net Reviews continues its astounding rate of publication. During the calendar year 2010 to date, 2,488 reviews were published on our site, bringing the archive to 28,186 reviews. Our readers owe a debt of gratitude to the tireless efforts of the review editors, copyeditors, our Vice President for Publications Christopher Ball, and the programming staff for such a successful effort.

H-Net made very important strides in its effort to migrate to new content delivery and service platforms. As the reporting period closed, our programmer had begun rewriting the programming for the Job Guide, which was completed by August 2010. The revisions added powerful new functionality to the system; clients now create and manage multiple postings through their own accounts, staff members can set and revise prices, create invoices, and change posting status without intervention from a programmer, and clients are now able to choose different kinds of posting, including

Prof. Kelly A. Woestman  
Pittsburg (KS) State University  
*Past President*

Prof. Jean Stuntz  
West Texas A&M University  
*President*

Prof. Julie Hofmann  
Shenandoah University  
*President-elect*

Matthew Gilmore  
Government of the District of Columbia  
*Vice President Networks*

Christopher Ball  
Independent Scholar  
*Vice President Research & Publication*

Prof. Richard Loosbrock  
Adams State College  
*Vice President Teaching & Learning*

Joseph Ferreira  
King Philip Regional High School  
*H-Net Staff Editor  
Secretary*

### **H-Net Council:**

Prof. Daniel Kline  
University of Alaska Anchorage

Justin Scott-Coe  
Claremont Graduate University

Prof. Ryan Dunch  
University of Alberta

Prof. Matthew Davis  
University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point

Prof. Michael D. Innis-Jimenez  
William Patterson University

Dr. Diane Labrosse  
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Prof. Ian Binnington  
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“featured ads” that display at the top of each page. Editors now can create customized job digests of recent ads in their specific fields for automatic posting to their lists.

The software development team, headed by Associate Director Heather Hawley, also dug into the tough issues involved with redesigning and rebuilding the network pages and content delivery systems for our core discussion forums. The group has selected Drupal, an open-source content-management package that is readily available and widely supported on the web, for this purpose. Several network prototype pages were constructed and testing began to determine what features need to be installed and how policies can be developed to apply H-Net’s basic principle of moderation and editing to these new software packages.

Special thanks are due to council member Ian Binnington and President Jean Stuntz for guiding a revision of our founding documents – the by-laws and council policies, including a new Terms of Use policy – through the Council. This is very important, highly-detailed work that will clear up the sources of user and editor misunderstanding about operations and practice.

Outgoing past-president Kelly Woestman once again organized a successful, and final, Teaching American History Symposium in partnership with Gilder Lehrman and the Organization of American Historians, which featured an able and interesting address by Prof. Bruce Vansledright of the University of Maryland. These symposia have achieved their signal purpose of launching a national conversation about history education in the college classroom, due largely to Kelly’s tireless efforts. At the end of December Kelly will be ending her term in the presidency, capping over a decade of service to H-Net as a Vice President for Teaching, council member, and President, in addition to her ongoing work as an editor at H-TAH, H-TLH, and H-TEACH. A strenuous advocate for our organization and its mission, Kelly has sacrificed a great deal on our behalf and deserves our continuing gratitude.

The Council has experienced higher than usual turnover in the past year, and several offices now remain vacant. I hope these will be filled with the upcoming elections so that our leadership draws from a broad range of opinion and experience. Michael Innis-Jimenez and Ryan Dunch will be rotating off the Council at the end of December. Both are veteran editors and council members, and we will miss their wisdom and good cheer. Dan Kline had to resign from the board for health reasons, and we wish him a strong recovery and many more years of professional growth and good living. The Council’s deliberations have improved tremendously in the past year by turning to quarterly web conferences for reports, discussion, and deliberation. This not only produced a huge savings in travel costs, it also increased the face to face interaction among us that is so vital to successful decision-making.

Let me close with a word of thanks to our wonderful staff at the home office: copyeditors Charlotte Weber and Basia Nowak, system administrator Dennis Boone, programmer Ronald Nussbaum, our clerks Kelly Knupfer and Melanie Foley, and especially Associate Director Heather Hawley. I am truly blessed to work in the company of such fine people.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Knupfer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "K".

Peter Knupfer  
Executive Director