

## **FOUR MISSION-CRITICAL POSITIONS LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA**

Archival positions at the Library of Virginia include those who oversee acquisition and processing of new collections.

### **Private Papers Archivist**

The Library has an outstanding and ever-growing collection of millions private papers – correspondence, diaries, account books, maps, drawings, recordings, Bible records, and other historical material that has been given to the Library by private citizens, businesses, churches, community groups, and organizations of all kinds. These private collections complement the state and local records held by the Library and are heavily used by a wide variety of researchers across the country and the world. In July 2008, the Library had 6 archivists working with these collections, arranging and processing them and creating finding aids to facilitate access to the rich content they contain. Budget reductions the Library has experienced since 2008 reduced this department's staff to 2; these remaining 2 archivists were laid off last November in the wake of the most recent budget reduction. Because of staff reductions, many collections comprising over 4,500 cubic feet are waiting processing and are currently unavailable to the public. Without restoration of at least one position the backlog of unprocessed and therefore inaccessible historical information will grow substantially and future acquisitions will be placed in jeopardy. Just this week, the Library was given the surviving records of Evergreen Cemetery in Richmond, the resting place of Maggie Walker, John Mitchell, Jr. and other notables in the African American community. The cemetery is in disrepair and these records provide the only source of information on the lives of the men and women who are buried there. When the public learns that the Library has been given this important collection, the demand to use it will be great – but we will be unable to make it accessible for years to come without anyone assigned to work on private collections such as this.

### **Digital Collections Specialist**

Over 4.5 million users visited the Library virtually last year to delve into the 98 digital collections currently online containing more than 11 million images. These include such diverse collections as the Electoral College Digital Collection, Civil War Sesquicentennial Legacy Collection, Kaine Email Project @ LVA, Government Reform Commission Reports, and the U.S. Army Signal Corps Photograph Collection. This position would allow the Library to make more of its collections available electronically, provide more efficient access to the content through the search capabilities of new technologies, and leverage its vast holdings to attract partners and outside funding for future digital projects.

### **Government Documents Librarian.**

Section 42.1-92-97 of the Code of Virginia gives the Library of Virginia responsibility for the Commonwealth's State Documents Depository Program mandating that it collect, preserve, and make accessible to the public all publications (in print and electronic format) issued by the executive, legislative and judicial branches of state government. The library maintains a list of all publications currently in print and a digital documents depository, where agencies can upload their electronic publications and distributes all state print publications to 11 regional depository libraries across Virginia for convenient access by citizens. The Library is also a congressionally-

designated depository library for federal government publications serving the 3rd Congressional District of Virginia and the Richmond metropolitan area, acquiring and providing citizens access to the publications of federal agencies. The Library currently has no one to oversee its State and Federal Documents Program. (In 2008, the Library's Government Documents Program had a staff of 5 librarians. Budget cuts since that time reduced this department to 2; these remaining 2 librarians were laid off last November in the wake of the most recent budget reduction.)

### **Records Management Specialist**

The Library of Virginia works with 128 state agencies in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government and with more than 500 local government agencies operating in Virginia's 95 counties and 38 cities to ensure that public records within the Commonwealth are managed efficiently and in keeping with the legislative intent of the Virginia Public Records Act. The Library currently has 4 records managers who share the above responsibilities for all of state and local government. This small staff is unable to keep up with the demand for assistance from the more than 2,000 state and local records officers they work with. As a result many retention schedules are out-of-date, training opportunities for new records officers limited, and the Library is behind in establishing retention requirements on issues relating to new technologies (appropriate retention periods for video surveillance and traffic cameras, to mention only one). Citizen requests under the Freedom of Information Act are growing, and the Library is unable to provide timely advice and guidance to agencies that often keep records beyond their accepted lifecycles or destroy them prematurely, in both cases placing government at risk. Unless we are able to fund an additional records management position, the gap between our responsibilities under the Virginia Public Records Act and our service to other government agencies will widen significantly.