



## **2016 Election – Candidate Statements**

### **Vice President/President Elect**

(Serves two years as vice-president, two years as president, and two years as past president on the Board of Directors.)

### **Marla Miller**

#### **University of Massachusetts Amherst**

Like others who have received word of their nomination for this office, I am both excited and humbled by the prospect of serving as your vice president/president-elect. Since my first NCPH meeting (Lowell, in 1999) as a newly-hired assistant professor, I have known the warmth and vitality of this exceptional community. It's been my pleasure to serve on the editorial board of *The Public Historian*, on the Curriculum & Training Committee, on the organization's Board of Directors, and as Program Committee Co-Chair (with Pat Mooney-Melvin, for Louisville in 2008). In every instance, I have seen how the values that infuse the best public history practice—generosity, collegiality, respect, good humor, and sleeves-up enterprise and innovation—also infuse NCPH, at every level.

My work in the field has been varied. I first glimpsed the world of public history as an undergraduate, during a life-changing summer with the Historic Deerfield Summer Fellowship Program. While in graduate school at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, to keep a hand in that world, I sought out opportunities to work in both archives and museums, and then spent two exhilarating years in the Sophia Smith Collection at Smith College, processing the papers of “Agents of Social Change” like Frances Fox Piven and Gloria Steinem. At the same time, I began taking on work as a consultant. In 1999, I joined the faculty at UMass Amherst, and became the Public History program's director a few years later. In 2009, I became editor of a new UMass Press series, *Public History in Historical Perspective*, which seeks to enrich the scholarly literature of our field. Through our program's field service work and as a researcher and scholar, I continue to collaborate and consult with a wide range of organizations and agencies, from small museums and historic sites around Massachusetts to the National Park Service.

In the sixteen years since my first NCPH meeting, I've been thrilled to see the organization continue to blossom. As vice president/president-elect, I would tap my experience as the director of both the UMass Public History Program and my department's graduate program to sustain the momentum that has gathered around the rethinking of graduate curricula as we widen intersections between the needs of employers and the substance of advanced training in the humanities. I also look forward to helping to expand public history's footprint; my own interests gravitate toward public history as a resource in the fields of medicine, healthcare, and aging, as well as our field's role in social justice activism, but I look forward to helping all of us find fresh, fertile ground for our respective enterprises. I also bring longstanding interest in development and fundraising to this position, and look forward to advancing

ongoing efforts to keep NCPH on the soundest possible financial footing. I have a deep affection for this organization and community that I know many of you share, and I look forward to helping NCPH thrive.

### **Board of Directors**

(You may vote for up to **three** individuals. Board members serve three-year terms. The NCPH board defines and advances the organization's mission, protects its financial and human assets, ensures adequate resources to carry out the mission, supervises and supports the executive director, and promotes the interests, programs, and reputation of NCPH. Members of the board include the president, vice president, immediate past president, secretary-treasurer, and nine other elected members, with the executive director, digital media editor, and the editor of *The Public Historian* serving as ex officio, non-voting members.)

### **Larry Cebula**

**Washington State Archives  
Eastern Washington University**

The National Council on Public History is by far the most dynamic and interesting of my professional organizations and I am humbled by the opportunity to serve on the Board of Directors. The strengths of the NCPH are the strengths of public history itself – inclusiveness, accuracy, accessibility and practicality. I hope to see the NCPH develop these strengths in ways that not only serve our members but strengthen public appreciation of history.

I work at the intersection of public and digital history. I hold a joint position as the Assistant Digital Archivist at the Washington State Archives and as Coordinator of Public History at Eastern Washington University. My work here has focused on leveraging organizational partnerships to train the next generation of public historians with traditional skills and an added digital edge. Some of the latter comes from working on our Curatescape project, SpokaneHistorical.org. In the recent past, I have served on the Digital Task Force of the Western History Association, as an Associate Editor on the Papers of William F. Cody, as a program evaluator on several Teaching American History grants, and as member of the organizing committee of the Pacific Northwest History Conference.

As a board member I would hope to help the organization to share its expertise, resources and conversations with a wider audience through digital media and advocacy. I would like to enlarge the already big tent of the NCPH to draw in members from diverse backgrounds and workplaces. I am pleased with growing international connections for public history and would like to deepen those relationships. And I want to listen to the membership – what do you folks want? A board member should listen as much as lead.

### **Yolanda Chávez Leyva**

**The University of Texas at El Paso**

I am honored to be nominated to serve on the Board of Directors of the NCPH. I have been involved with the NCPH as a conference presenter, guest blogger, plenary speaker at an NCPH mini-conference, and reviewer for *The Public Historian*. In 2013, the NCPH presented Museo Urbano, a museum which I co-founded and direct, the Outstanding Public History Project award. My experience with the NCPH has been inspiring; I have found an exciting community of practitioners and scholars there. It would be my pleasure to work on behalf of the organization that has given so much to public historians, including myself and my students.

I received my PhD from the University of Arizona in 1999 with a focus on Mexican American and borderlands history. After four years at UT San Antonio, I joined the faculty of UTEP's history

department in 2001 and began retraining myself as a public historian. Step by step, the public history program moved forward as I taught classes in oral history, museums, and archives. My students have produced historical booklets for the community, conducted oral histories, and implemented “museum for a day” projects at a local high school. In 2010, we opened Museo Urbano in a two room tenement apartment in one of the most historic Mexican immigrant neighborhoods in the United States. As many studies have indicated, people of color and working class people often do not go to historic museums or sites because of inaccessibility. Museo Urbano brings public history to the community. We have received funding from the Texas State Historical Commission, Humanities Texas, and the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience (NEH and IMLS funding).

Under my leadership, Museo Urbano has collaborated with the El Paso Museum of History, the El Paso Archaeology Museum, the UTEP Centennial Museum, as well as community non-profits working with displaced garment workers and farmworkers. In 2014, we were one of 20 sites chosen nationally by the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience to create and implement the National Immigration Dialogues. In 2014, I was invited by the Brazilian government to conduct training related to my public history work for a group of international professionals from historic sites and emerging historic projects. I am at a point in my career as a public historian where I have the broad experience and energy to devote to a vibrant organization like the NCPH.

In addition, I recently ended a five year term as department chair where I gained experience in financial and budget management, grant writing, and organizational dynamics.

I am especially interested in finding ways for the NCPH to help foster diversity in our profession. As we know, for our profession to diversify, the educational pipeline must also diversify. It would be an honor for me to serve on the NCPH board of directors where I feel my dedication to expanding the profession, racially/ethnically as well as geographically, and my devotion to mentoring future public historians will be of use to the organization and our profession.

### **Modupe Labode**

#### **Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis**

It is an honor to be nominated for a position on the NCPH Board of Directors. I joined the NCPH in 2002 and consider it to be my professional home. The organization’s current strength is the result of excellent leadership and engaged members. As the NCPH begins its next phase under the new executive director, the board of directors will help the organization build on its strengths and meet new challenges. I am particularly interested in two main issues. The first is helping the organization develop and maintain a racially and ethnically diverse membership. The second is supporting public historians as they advocate both for their profession and the importance of history in society.

Like many public historians, my professional path has been circuitous. I earned my PhD from Oxford University and taught African history for several years at Iowa State University. After evaluating my satisfaction with academic history, I decided that I was interested in doing history outside the classroom. In 2002, I began working at the Colorado Historical Society (now History Colorado) as the chief historian, where I had the privilege of curating exhibitions, supervising the historic marker program, and collaborating with a wide range of activists, government historians, and consultants. Most importantly, I had numerous conversations with members of the public about the importance of history in their lives. I have taught at IUPUI since 2007, where I am an associate professor of history and museum studies, and a public scholar of African American history and museums. This unique position gives me the

opportunity to work with community members, students, and faculty colleagues, as well as pursue research on representations of African Americans at museums and historic sites.

I have been involved in the NCPH at several levels. Most recently I was the co-chair of the Program Committee for the 2015 annual meeting. I am currently a member of the Diversity Task Force and the Local Arrangements Committee for the 2017 annual meeting in Indianapolis. I also am a member of the American Association for State and Local History, the Oral History Association, and the Western History Association.

**Adina Jocelyn Langer**

**Museum of History and Holocaust Education, Kennesaw State University**

I am honored to be considered for a position on the board of the National Council on Public History. As I've navigated the waters of geographical and career transition, NCPH has been my North Star, guiding my professional journey. If elected, I will advocate for new professionals, transitioning professionals, consultants, and those without institutional affiliations, seeking to improve professional communication, education, and training. In my nine years of practice, I have always appreciated NCPH's flexibility and support. I will work to sustain NCPH as a source of support and opportunity for an increasingly diverse community of public historians.

I attended my first NCPH meeting as a graduate student in Archives and Public History at New York University. There, I presented a digital "poster" on alternative methods for public engagement with oral histories and benefited from the conference mentoring program, connecting with an early-career public historian who was equally passionate about digital methodologies, institutional partnerships, and historical thinking. In all, I've attended five annual meetings, during which I've served in many different capacities. I am acutely aware of the value of annual meetings, and of how difficult it is for many people to attend them. If elected, I will work to strengthen NCPH's connections with members unable to attend conferences.

My own relationship with NCPH was strengthened as I moved from being the memorial exhibition manager at the National September 11 Memorial Museum in New York to long-distance exhibition development work and freelance consulting from my new home in Michigan. Mentors at NCPH connected me with the Consultants Committee, on which I have served since 2010, co-chairing it with Morgen Young since 2012. Together, we launched an 8-session TweetChat program, broadening the reach of the Committee, and we have worked to represent consultants' interests at NCPH. The new NCPH website includes a searchable Consultants Directory developed with community input from our 2013 survey.

Since 2011, I have worked with NCPH Digital Media Editor Cathy Stanton first as a contributor to *Off the Wall* and then as a section editor and co-lead-editor of *History@Work*. I have enjoyed in-depth technical conversations as well as opportunities to think broadly about the blog's content, responsiveness to current events, community engagement, and increasingly close relationship with *The Public Historian*. If elected, I will strive to keep NCPH on the vanguard of digital exploration without losing sight of the diverse methods of communication, presentation and publication preferred by our membership.

Finally, since 2014, I have taught graduate courses in digital public history and exhibition development at Georgia State University. Starting next year, I will teach undergraduates at Kennesaw State. I believe that universities, and especially university museums, should serve as laboratories for public history learning and community engagement while also preparing students to navigate the "real world."

I hope that you will consider me for a position on the NCPH board. I look forward to continuing to serve the public history community through NCPH.

### **Troy Reeves**

#### **UW-Madison Oral History Program**

I am a professional oral historian who, for 16 years, has lead two oral history programs at the Idaho State Historical Society and UW-Madison Archives. During this time, I have cleaved the public components of my job into three key aspects: engagement, service, and leadership. My skills in these three areas would allow me to serve effectively on the National Council for Public History's Board of Directors.

First, I do not just manage oral history collections. I have engaged the community, presenting on oral history topics, leading workshops, or consulting on history projects. Since 1999, I have given 325 presentations or workshops in Idaho, Wisconsin, and around the U.S.

On top of that, I have collaborated with dozen of groups. For example, in 2010, after meeting a local playwright, we collaborated to collect anecdotes about the 1970 Sterling Hall Bombing, which occurred on UW-Madison's campus. We then conducted oral histories and other primary source research, leading to "Uncivil Disobedience," a documentary theater piece. Also, I worked with the Westmorland Neighborhood group in Madison, training volunteers to do oral history, culminating in the book, *Voices of Westmorland*.

In terms of service, I have presented at dozens of professional conferences, including the joint NCPH-OAH Milwaukee conference and NCPH's 2015 Nashville meeting. Since 1999, I have served the Oral History Association on its education and nomination committees and a task force to modernize the *Oral History Review*. And since January 2012, I have been the managing editor of the *Review*. This June, I joined the board of the Wisconsin Humanities Council. Since arriving, I have met with WHC leadership and local humanists to propose a book, using oral histories, about Wisconsin work.

Last, I have taken leadership roles in oral history efforts. For the OHA, I co-led the Program Committee for the 2011 annual meeting and led Local Arrangements for last year's event. In Idaho and Wisconsin, I established oral history roundtables, which met several times each year. I became involved in regional groups, taking leadership roles in the Northwest Oral History Association and trying to bring together oral historians from "flyover country" to create the Midwest Oral Historians.

And during my tenure directing two oral history programs in Idaho and Wisconsin, I have taken the lead to bring like-minded folks together. Before leaving Idaho, I lead an effort to start digitizing primary source material at the ISHS for easier public access. This led to a one-day digital summit and to a successful LSTA grant to start digitizing oral history audio and text based documents. At UW-Madison, I found funding and partners to convene three Wisconsin Oral History Days. Those events, held in Madison, Eau Claire, and Milwaukee, brought together dozens of people to discuss oral history ideas and projects.

To conclude, these talents would serve me well on NCPH's board. Specifically, if elected, I would engage, serve, and lead, working with the NCPH's executive director, staff, and board to continue its successes and achieve its long-range goals and objectives.

**John H. Sprinkle, Jr.**  
**National Park Service**

It is certainly an unexpected honor to be nominated for the NCPH Board of Directors. I believe that service to one's community (and chosen profession) is an essential characteristic of a well-rounded individual (and public historian). While I have participated in numerous NCPH meetings, including a working group on Administrative History practice last spring in Nashville, my current role is to serve as the guest editor for a forthcoming issue of *The Public Historian* that focuses on the centennial of the National Park Service. I will also be co-chairing the Program Committee at the 2017 annual meeting in Indianapolis.

After a decade as a private sector historic preservation consultant, I joined the National Park Service in late 1998 where I have worked in the National Historic Landmark program (see Marty Melosi's brilliant essay in *The Public Historian* on the controversy surrounding the designation of the Fresno Sanitary Landfill as an NHL), the Federal Preservation Institute, and now serve as the agency's Bureau Historian. I hold a doctorate in American history from the College of William and Mary and have taught historic preservation courses at several institutions in the Washington, DC area. Routledge published my first book, *Crafting Preservation Criteria: the National Register of Historic Places and American Historic Preservation* in 2014. My next book, entitled *Saving Spaces*, will trace the intersection of the land conservation and historic preservation movements in the United States.

My career path has included a variety of service to statewide, regional, and national organizations, and I currently serve as the Chair of the Alexandria (VA) Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission and on the Board of Trustees of the Historic Alexandria Foundation. If elected, I look forward to working with the NCPH membership to further our collective goals.

**Nominating Committee**

(You may vote for up to **two** individuals. Nominating Committee members serve three-year terms. The committee identifies, determines the eligibility of, and contacts persons to be considered for elected offices of NCPH. Each October, the committee compiles the slate of candidates for the annual election.)

**Aleia Brown**  
**Michigan State University Museum**

I am a visiting research and museum practice scholar at the Michigan State University Museum, where I primarily work on a collaborative curatorial project with the Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation. My written work, mainly covering museums, race, and gender issues, has appeared in *Slate*.

My research and professional interests include examining material culture as a realization of intellectual history, 20<sup>th</sup>-century black life, oral history, women's history, curatorial affairs, not-for-profit management, and museum leadership. As a doctoral candidate in Middle Tennessee State University's Public History program, I was a graduate research assistant at the Center for Historic Preservation. I hold a M.A. in Public History from Northern Kentucky University and a B.A. in African-American History from Coppin State University.

Prior to my work at the Michigan State University Museum, I was the curator at the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center in Wilberforce, Ohio. I was part of the leadership team that reopened the museum in 2013 after it had been closed for nearly two years. In addition to other curatorial and administrative projects, I curated the long-term exhibition *How I Got Over*.

Always looking for creative solutions to better address issues in the field, I am the co-founder of two Twitter chats. Born out of *the Joint Statement from Museum Bloggers and Colleagues on Ferguson and Other Events*, Adrienne Russell and I began moderating the #MuseumsRespondtoFerguson chat to continue the conversation on race, state-sanctioned violence, vigilante justice, and complicity as it pertains to museum spaces. With Joshua Crutchfield, I co-founded #BlkTwitterstorians as a space for black historians to connect and to gain support and affirmation.

Understanding the National Council on Public History's (NCPH) importance to practitioners, scholars and communities, I am most interested in helping to identify and maintain strong leadership to carry out the organization's mission. Furthermore, my commitment to refining public history practice in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be a strong asset to the NCPH's nominating committee. My professional experience with digital history, diversity and inclusion, and strategic planning will inform my work as a committee member.

### **Tim Grove**

#### **Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum**

I would welcome the opportunity to serve on the Nominating Committee. I've worked in the public history field for over twenty years, at three Smithsonian museums and at the Missouri Historical Society. I'm currently chief of museum learning at the National Air and Space Museum. I've worked on many national projects that have allowed me to make connections across the U.S. The most rewarding was my work on the National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Exhibition which toured the nation. The exhibition looked at the cultural landscape and it was an honor to make many Native American friends through that project.

I've been on the faculty of the Seminar for Historical Administration (SHA) for six years and every year I am impressed with the group of students gathered from institutions from around the U.S. and Canada. I've made many great connections through SHA and have learned a lot from them.

A conversation I had at SHA led to the launch of the History Relevance Campaign, an effort devoted to raising the profile of history in society. While not a new conversation, the HRC recognizes that we must be more articulate about why history is relevant and how it teaches lifelong skills that make history students valuable employees. And we must collect and show evidence that history makes a difference in people's lives. HRC seeks to empower diverse history organizations to speak the same language of history advocacy. I was proud to lead the campaign's first conference conversation at the NCPH annual meeting in Ottawa several years ago. Since then I've spoken at various conferences and have met public historians all over who want to get involved and be a part of this effort.

I'm a networker by nature and enjoy connecting people. I've been an active member of the American Association for State and Local History for many years, serving on various committees and originating and writing the *History Bytes* column in *History News*. More recently I've joined NCPH and look forward to connecting more to its broad membership.

During a year-long Smithsonian leadership development program, I had the opportunity to do a two-month rotation in the Smithsonian Affiliations program office. This gave me the chance to interact with even more museum professionals who work hard to educate and inspire millions of Americans.

My recent book *A Grizzly in the Mail and Other Adventures in American History* is a testament to my passion for history. It's a tribute to the work we all do to share our desire to learn from the past. If

elected, I will do my best to find experienced and passionate public historians who want to serve the public history field and lead it to a bright future.

**Joel Ralph**

**Director of Programs, Canada's History**

Thank you for the opportunity to stand for election for the NCPH Nominating Committee. I am very honoured to be considered for this important position. I am continually impressed by the scale and scope of work accomplished by NCPH and its dedicated supporters. Through NCPH I've had the chance to meet likeminded colleagues and friends dedicated to public history and the organization has quickly become my home for professional development.

As the Director of Programs for Canada's History, a national non-profit charitable organization, I currently oversee several national award and youth programs, including Young Citizens, which I presented about this past year in Nashville. My work over my nine years with the society has ranged from education and community history programs to new media and website development. In all of these initiatives I have been tasked with growing and expanding our organization's audience and developing relationships with partners and funders such as the federal government.

I have received significant support from fellow historians in establishing my career since graduating with my Master's in Public History from Western University in 2006. I believe NCPH plays a crucial role in helping young historians establish themselves and in continuing their professional development. This is why I have been happy to serve on the New Professional Award Committee for the past three years including as the chair for the current year.

My own areas of interest are in digital history, publishing, awards and teaching. Through my work with Canada's History I have been privileged to work with exceptional historians, teachers, storytellers, museums, and community organizations across Canada. As a member of the nominating committee I would hope to continue the inviting approach and dedicated work that has attracted myself and so many others to this exceptional professional organization.

**Daniel Vivian**

**University of Louisville**

I am delighted to be nominated for the NCPH Nominating Committee. The opportunity to shape the future of the organization through the selection of new board members is an exciting and challenging prospect. I believe that my experience as a public historian and public history educator provides valuable perspectives on the development and direction of public history. I have been active in NCPH for nearly twenty years since earning an M.A. in public history at the University of South Carolina. I currently serve as chair of the Curriculum and Training Committee and as co-chair of the joint AASLH-AHA-OAH-NCPH Task Force on Public History Education and Employment. I previously served on the Consulting Award Committee (2010-2013) and was a member of the Program Committee for the 2004 meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia. The recent growth of NCPH, the quality of sessions at annual meetings, and the growing prominence of public historians within the historical profession is exciting and inspiring. If elected to the nominating committee, I will work to ensure the selection of board members committed to sustaining these trends and charting a vision appropriate to the potential of NCPH.



My background includes experience in public history and as a public history educator. I am currently assistant professor of history and director of public history at the University of Louisville, where I have taught since 2010. I received my PhD from the Johns Hopkins University after working in historic preservation for nearly ten years. I served as a historian with the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office in 1999-2002 and with the National Register of Historic Places program of the National Park Service from 2002-2007. I returned to graduate school to gain the credentials necessary to teach at the college and university level, specifically with aspirations of teaching public history. At the University of Louisville, I have fostered the growth of a small but effective graduate program that has won praise from partner organizations and has prepared graduates for professional employment in public history. I would welcome the opportunity to use my knowledge and experience to ensure effective governance of NCPH and guide the near-term direction of the organization.