

PUBLIC HISTORY NEWS

Volume 45 | Number 2 | March 2025

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS: SEE YOU IN MONTRÉAL!



DENISE MERINGOLO / DDM@UMBC.EDU

We look forward to welcoming you to the beautiful and historic city of Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Montréal sits at the confluence of the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers on the unceded territory of the Kanien'kehà:ka people, a meeting place for many First Nations including the Kanien'kehá:ka of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, Huron/Wendat, Abenaki, and Anishinaabeg. Today, Montréal is recognized as the center of Canada's Francophone culture, and it is celebrated for its French language media and the French influence evident in its architecture and culture. The city also serves as the cultural capital for English Québec. Montréal is also home to immigrants and migrants from across North America and around the world. This mix of people and culture has created a vibrant city, known for its art, theater, literature, and gastronomic delights.



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We convene our 2025 National Council on Public History Annual Meeting in the beautiful city of Montréal to think critically about



the ideal of Solidarity/
Solidarité. Our conference
theme appropriately
echoes historical and
contemporary calls for
worker solidarity. In the
still churning wake of
the COVID-19 global
pandemic, inequities in

the landscape of work and labor have come into sharp focus. We have the responsibility to critically examine persistent issues across the field such as unpaid labor, job insecurity, low wages, and political vulnerability. As culture workers, we understand the critical role we can play in building community across boundaries that seem unbreachable. There has been much written about the divisions that have undermined civil discourse and threatened basic human rights in the 21st century. As historians, we know these divisions are not new. Solidarity/Solidarité invites us to examine the past with clear eyes, as this is crucial in order to envision new ways of connecting, engaging in productive dialogue, and charting paths toward a common good.



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When the social and political climate feels inhospitable, I am grateful for the NCPH community. Our annual meetings revitalize our work, bringing people from a variety of professions, perspectives, and experiences together for lively, collegial, and collaborative conversations. We return home to hard work, with the support of a peaceful army at our backs.

Thank you to our Program Committee and its co-chairs, Krista McCracken, Kimberly Springle, and Sierra Van Ryck de Groot, who built a slate of sessions that will inform



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our practice and strengthen our resolve for the coming year. These presentations, roundtables, discussions, and working groups will encourage us to think creatively about what it means to build community, to stand in solidarity, and to challenge stories and conditions that undermine those efforts. We are in their debt. Thank you also to Catherine Charlebois, Steven High, Lucie Morisset, and all the members of their Local Arrangements Committee for welcoming us into the public history community of Montréal. I look forward to experiencing the history and culture of the city and surrounding area.

Of course, none of our time together would be possible without the tireless efforts of the NCPH staff. Our work to establish more just and equitable labor practices in the field requires us to act in solidarity with Stephanie Rowe, Meghan Hillman, Stasia Tanzer, and Sarah Singh. We must not allow their yearlong work to organize our gathering become invisible to us. As we arrive in Montréal, please join me in thanking them at the registration desk, in individual sessions, and at our social gatherings.

I look forward to listening, learning, engaging, and standing with you in solidarity this month!

-Denise D. Meringolo is the President of the National Council on Public History and the Chair of the Department of History at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

2025 Annual Meeting Program cover.

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NCPH inspires public engagement with the past and serves the needs of practitioners in putting history to work in the world by building community among historians expanding professional skills and tools, fostering critical reflection on historical practice, and publicly advocating for history and historians. Public History News is published in March, June, September, and December, NCPH reserves the right to reject material that is not consistent with the goals and purposes of the organization. Individual membership orders, changes of address, and business and editorial correspondence should be addressed to NCPH 127 Cavanaugh Hall – IU Indianapolis, 425 University Blvd., Indianapolis, IN 46202-5140. E-mail: ncph@iu.edu. Tel: 317-274-2716. Join online or renew at www.ncph.org Headquartered on the campus of IU Indianapolis, NCPH is grateful for the generous support of the IU School of Liberal Arts and the Department of History

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2025 NCPH ELECTION RESULTS

Thank you to all voters and the Nominating Committee, and a special thanks to the individual candidates who agreed to allow their names to be placed on the ballot! While it's bittersweet to say goodbye to our friends and colleagues transitioning out of their leadership roles at NCPH, there's a lot of new and exciting changes afoot in the organization. Join us in welcoming new leadership!

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HISTORY@WORK CFP: #ADVOCACY: SUCCESS STORIES IN THE FIELD OF PUBLIC HISTORY

In line with the Advocacy pillar of NCPH's 2023-2028 Long Range Plan, History@Work (H@W) invites prospective volunteer authors to submit pitches, one-three paragraphs in length, defining "advocacy" in their particular area of public history work. All too often our stories of lessons learned are seen as too difficult to write about, are seen as depressing, or are confined to one-off discussions. The NCPH Advocacy Committee and History@Work Editorial Committee seek pitches for blog posts that focus on the incremental nature of advocacy, modeling successes in the field of public history while also serving as a how-to for our peers, new professionals, and students alike. As ever, public historians at all career levels, emergent

or retired, are invited to contribute no matter where they practice public history.

The term "advocacy" can be nebulous, until it isn't! For examples of how "advocacy" throughout the field has been addressed in the *History@Work* blog format, see below and explore the #advocacy tag on *H@W*.

Two examples of recently-published pieces responding to our #advocacy Call for Proposals (CFP):

• "Private memories, public memorials: the 1971 Bangladesh Genocide" - Ummul Muhseneen • "Immigration and Public History in the Second Trump Era" - Will Walker

We are open to a variety of responses, but some specific interest areas and examples we have been thinking about include:

- The role of public history and the public historian in the midst of our fraught political moment (e.g. the cancellation of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs in the federal government).
 - This issue is explored by NCPH
 President Denise Meringolo in the
 September 2023 Public History News
 contribution "Advocacy is not a choice"

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Call for Proposals



#ADVOCACY
IN THE FIELD





2024 NCPH CONTRIBUTORS

In 2024, you donated a total of \$39,659 for the Annual Fund, \$10,245 for the Endowment, and \$1,025 for the Digital Integration Fund. Thank you all!

NCPH is also deeply grateful for the many sponsors of the annual meeting, and the Patron, Partner, and Sustaining members who provide additional support for the organization. See how your giving sustains our organization in the infographic on pg. 10.

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WHAT'S IT WORTH TO YOU?



BILL BRYANS/BILL.BRYANS@OKSTATE.EDU

"What's it worth to you?"—this is often asked as a humorous retort in response to an outlandish question or request. Though this phrase also comes up when seriously asking someone how much or whether they sincerely value something. Adopt the

Stephanie and Alan Rowe †

latter meaning with me throughout this piece and let's take some time to consider your membership in NCPH. What's it worth to you? What does being a part of NCPH mean to you professionally and personally?

As you probably know, individual membership in NCPH comes with certain defined benefits (like printed copies of the December and June Public History News newsletter!). All members also receive quarterly

issues of NCPH's journal, The Public Historian, and enjoy a variety of discounts, including on annual meeting registration, access to JPASS, and the purchase of archival supplies. In addition, membership affords opportunities to network and collaborate with other public historians by serving on committees, attending conferences, participating in special initiatives, and through exchanges on various social media platforms. Those at higher membership levels—Sustaining, Institutional, Partner, and Patron—enjoy these and additional benefits, such as annual updates from the NCPH president and extra copies of or logins to our publications. A full description of NCPH's membership structure and the benefits accompanying each tier can be found at https://ncph.org/ about/join-us-2 /.

NCPH CALL TO ACTION ISSUED FEBRUARY 5, 2025

Public historians who work either in or with the federal government are currently under attack. On January 20 and 21, 2025, President Donald Trump signed a series of executive orders that included direct attacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) activities in the federal government. These include:

- "Ending Radical And Wasteful Government DEI Programs And Preferencing," which orders the elimination of DEI offices and other DEI initiatives within the federal government;
- "Defending Women From Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government," which prohibits the federal government from funding programs that acknowledge gender identity; and
- "Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity," which ends affirmative action enforcement for federal contractors and requires that contractors and grant awardees do not promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.

On January 27, 2025, a Memorandum from the White House Office of Management

and Budget (OMB M-25-13) directed federal agencies to temporarily pause the disbursements of grants and loans on a wide range of programs. A judge temporarily halted the freeze, and on January 29, the administration rescinded the federal funding freeze order. At the time of this statement, however, it is unclear whether or not the funding freeze remains in effect. Reports suggest some agencies have yet to see their funding restored.

Then, news broke on February 3, 2025, that Elon Musk and employees with the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) gained unauthorized access to the Treasury Department platform that pays federal employees, compromising sensitive personal data. Developing news stories reveal additional efforts by Musk, DOGE, and the Trump administration to exercise unconstitutional power over federal spending, threaten civil service protection, and dismantle the federal government.

President Trump's executive orders, the OMB memorandum, and subsequent actions by the DOGE have created tremendous confusion, restricted access to critical funds,

and impeded the ability of public historians in the federal government and beyond to do their work. They do not only impact the archivists, archeologists, cultural resource specialists, grant funders, park rangers, historians, curators, and museum specialists who work as federal employees. They also impact the consultants and organizations who either do work for the federal government or receive federal funding. This includes NCPH, which holds membership in the Chesapeake Watershed Cooperative Ecosystem Support Unit and which supports public history projects with the National Park Service via Task Agreements.

Please join the National Council on Public History in defending public historians and advocating for diversity, equity, and inclusiveness in the workplace, in historical interpretation, and in historical scholarship. We urge you to contact your congressional representatives and express your objections to any administrative action that:

 undermines the ability of public historians both inside and outside the federal government to conduct crucial civic work;

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 ▶

NCPH Toolkit for Contacting Representatives

Key Ideas

Object to actions by the current administration that:

- unconstitutionally expand executive power and threaten congressional control over federal spending
- undermine the ability of public historians (both inside and outside the federal government) to conduct crucial work
- · target diversity, equity, and inclusion
- · freeze previously-authorized federal funding
- threaten the US's longstanding commitment to professional, non-partisan civil service
- allow for the dismissal of federal workers or the dissolution of federal departments, agencies, or offices by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE)

Tips

- Pick or choose from the provided "key ideas" or other concerns you want to express
- Use your own words and avoid using form language
- Letters/postcards have the most impact, especially if the postmark matches the representative's congressional district
- Find your representatives at: https://www.congress.gov/mem bers/find-your-member
- Bring friends or colleagues together for in-person write-ins

Welcome, New Members!

HISTORY@WORK CFP: #ADVOCACY: SUCCESS STORIES IN THE FIELD OF PUBLIC HISTORY // CONTID. FROM PAGE 3



Image from Will Walker's History@Work post, "Immigration and Public History in the Second Trump Era' - Japanese Americans in front of poster with internment orders", 25 April 1942. Photo by Dorothea Lange, 210-G-2A-572, Records of War Relocation Authority, Record Group 210; National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD

- Labor in the field and/or at your institution
 - This issue was explored by the NCPH 2023 annual meeting working group, "Empowering the Public History Workplace" - Andy Urban and Alena Pirok

- Principles inspired by community organizing that have been applied to your public history advocacy work. This issue is explored in:
 - "Discovering activism and advocacy in historic preservation through my grandparents furniture" - Jacqueline Hudson
 - "Who Should Tell the Story? The Pennhurst Haunted Asylum and the Pennhurst Museum in Public History" -Diana M. Katovitch
- The inspiring principles which frame your public history work or research and inform how *you* define "advocacy", as exemplified by:
 - "Practicing public history on Wikipedia" - Madeline Hellmich
 - "Join Us in a Dream: A National Museum of Disability History and Culture" - Henry J. Kennedy and Nathan R. Stenberg



Image from Ummul Muhseneen's History@Work post, "'Private memories, public memorials: the 1971 Bangladesh Genocide' - Memorial for the Martyred Intellectuals. Photo credit: Ummul Muhseneen

We welcome diverse perspectives that contextualize contemporary issues related to advocacy in the field of public history. We seek to publish a series of posts that act as a sustainable model of successes in the field. Prospective essays may have more than one author, and prospective contributors are welcome to propose Q&A interview formats on this topic. Read more about our pitch process at https://ncph.org/history-at-work/guidelines/. Send pitches or questions to us at history-at-work/guidelines/. Send pitches or questions to us at history-at-work/@ncph.org.

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WHAT'S IT WORTH TO YOU? // CONT'D, FROM PAGE 4

I encourage you to review it! If you have questions, or want to learn more, reach out to our incredible Membership Coordinator, Stasia Tanzer (atanzer@iu.edu).

It is relatively easy to assign value to these publications and discounts when determining the monetary worth of your membership. It is more elusive to determine the value of the non-monetary, and at times even intangible, benefits that come with being an active part of an organization that serves those dedicated to putting history to work in the world. Those intangibles are likely the greatest reward of being a NCPH member.

They certainly are for me. I first joined NCPH in 1987. I was a newly hired un-tenured assistant professor in an academic department that appreciated my public history experience and wanted to build a public history program. Regardless of their intentions at the time, they also evaluated me using traditional academic criteria, which left me in a vulnerable position. Becoming an active NCPH member proved critical in achieving tenure and securing my career. I absolutely owe my career to NCPH which provided both the knowledge and supportive colleagues that enabled me to

navigate through the challenges of being a public historian in the academy for over thirty years. That is why I maintain my individual membership at the Patron level.

I am confident that many members share similar experiences in which NCPH had or is having a direct and meaningful influence on their professional (and maybe even personal) life. Since its founding, NCPH has been a transformational force for the public history field and its practitioners. The financial support of its many members and others have made this possible. The need for that support continues today as NCPH seeks to continue this trajectory and support public historians at all stages of their career with an eye towards greater inclusion and diversity in our ranks. So, when it comes time to renew your individual membership, and even earlier if you wish, consider upgrading your membership to the Sustaining, Partner,

or Patron level. Make your membership

category reflect what NCPH is worth to you.



-Bill Bryans directed the public history program at Oklahoma State University for over thirty years before retiring in 2019. He was the first two-year president, has been a member of the NCPH Curriculum and Training Committee, and currently serves as co-chair of the Development Committee.

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CFP - THE PUBLIC HISTORIAN SPECIAL ISSUE: PUBLIC HISTORY IN THE LATINX MIDWEST

GUEST EDITORS: DELIA FERNÁNDEZ-JONES (MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY), CHANTEL RODRÍGUEZ (MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY), SERGIO M. GONZÁLEZ (MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY)

Those with resources often shape and create narratives of place and belonging that erase marginalized people's presence and contributions. Public history offers the potential to remedy this power imbalance. This special issue examines this dynamic among Latinxs in the Midwest and the role public history plays in reshaping the narratives of America's heartland. From 2000 to 2020, the Latinx population increased by more than ninety percent across twelve US Midwestern states. These newcomers joined a century-long history of Latinx communities in the region. And yet, Latinx people have been largely left out of both historical and contemporary mainstream narratives of a place often referred to as the archetype for American identity. Instead, this geographic region is often associated with white, rural stories that erase people of color. Of late, however, a diverse assortment of scholars, community collaborators, and public history professionals have sought to reset narratives surrounding Latinx placemaking and community formation in the Midwest. These initiatives have occurred and continue to blossom in a variety of locations, ranging from within historical societies, museums, and classrooms to home altars, genealogical recoveries, and murals in the barrios, farmlands, and places in between that Latinx Midwesterners call home. This issue provides us with ways of understanding belonging in the Midwest, but also in various places where Latinxs and other communities are marginalized.

This special issue seeks to reveal how scholars, public historians, and communities of the Latinx Midwest have at times worked within and in collaboration with public institutions and, at times outside of them, to document and share these histories. It will also examine how Latinx communities and public historians have encouraged traditional history institutions to better document and exhibit these histories, at times doing so as a form of archival

recovery and historical retrofitting. The special issue seeks to interrogate such questions as: how have Latinxs made space for themselves in public history institutions? What narratives need to be included in public history institutions? How have museums and public history institutions worked to incorporate Latinx communities into Midwest history and/or partner with Latinx communities to tell their stories? What considerations should historians of the Latinx Midwest historians consider when they engage in this work? What methodologies do Latinx Midwest historians turn to account for a general lack of collecting by archival societies and museums? What do we earn in entering collaborative, reciprocal, and ethical partnerships with community organizations? How have Latinxs created communities alongside African American, white, Indigenous, and Asian communities, among others, who have also long called the Midwest home? Where and how have

Call for Proposals! The Public Historian Special Issue: Public History in the Latinx Midwest Apply at: https://ncph.org/news/tphspecial-issue-call-for-papers/

collaborations developed and continue to grow in various locations? How can engaging with the histories of the Latinx Midwest help us better understand the ways public historians engage with regional and national stories? How have public history initiatives, broadly conceived, influenced how Americans understand Latinxs communities at the local, regional, and national levels?

The editors welcome proposals for articles but also encourage proposals from a wide variety of practitioners and in alternative formats, such as reports from the field, interviews with practitioners, and roundtable discussions. Proposals, which should be no longer than one double-spaced page, should be submitted to *The Public Historian* at <a href="mailto:should-be-good-should-

NCPH CALL TO ACTION // CONT'D. FROM PAGE 5

// CONT D. TROMTAGE

- targets diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives;
- freezes previously-authorized federal funding;
- undermines the United State's longstanding commitment to professional, non-partisan civil service; and/or
- allows for the dismissal of federal workers or the dissolution of federal departments, agencies, or offices by the Department of Government Efficiency.

The National Council on Public History urges members to contact their representatives via postcard, letter, or phone call. Emails and other mass messaging platforms like petitions are often ignored. If you do choose to email your representatives; in the interest of protecting our colleagues, please refrain from sending advocacy-related or political correspondence to federal employees at their work emails. With postcards, letters, or phone calls, make sure the postmark or area code matches the representative's congressional district. Consider highlighting how these executive orders are an unconstitutional expansion of executive power and threaten congressional control over federal spending (the "power of the purse"), a point that should resonate with representatives across the political spectrum. You can find and contact your congressional representatives here: https://www.congress. gov/members/find-your-member.

On February 7 and 26, 2025, the NCPH Advocacy Committee hosted virtual letter and postcard-writing lunch hours, and we're looking forward to holding another in-person writing event in the exhibit hall at NCPH 2025. In the meantime, we encourage members who might have the capacity to organize similar in-person gatherings of public historians in your area to find additional community support in this challenging time. Reach out to ncph@iu.edu if you'd like to publicize such an event within the NCPH community. To see NCPH's other recent advocacy work, visit https://ncph.org/what-is-public-history/advocacy/.

NPS Black History Survey: accepting rolling responses











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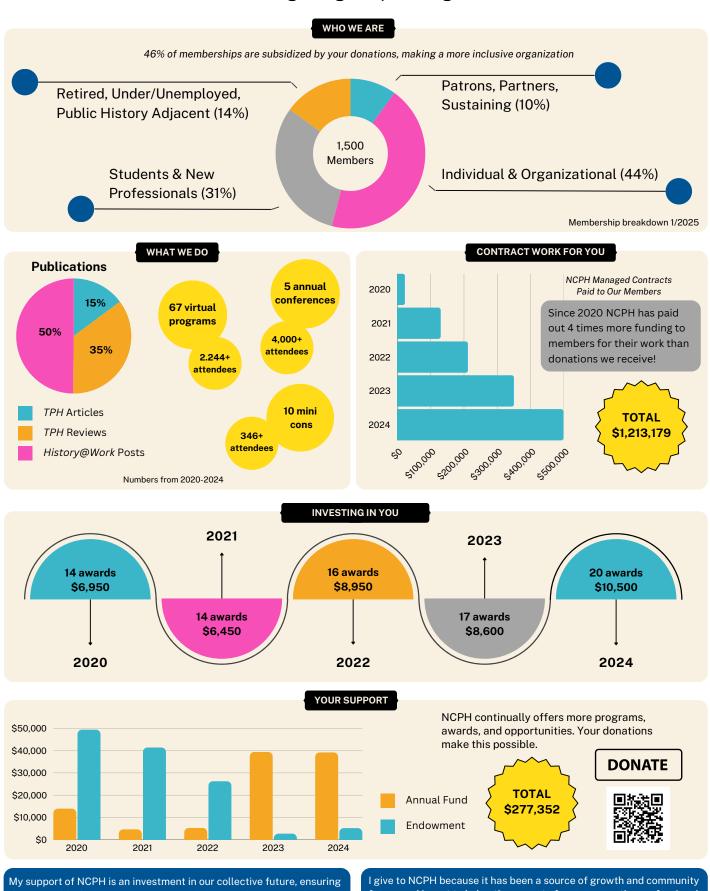
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National Council on Public History

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My support of NCPH is an investment in our collective future, ensuring that our public history community can continue to be sustained, grow, and flourish.

--Marianne Babal

I give to NCPH because it has been a source of growth and community for me and I want to help others create form a supportive professional community to last a lifetime.

--Joe Cialdella

NCPH AWARD WINNERS FOR 2025

Please join us in congratulating the recipients of this year's awards for outstanding achievement in a variety of public history formats. Full details about the award winners' projects will be released in conjunction with the NCPH Annual Meeting. We hope you will help us celebrate during the 2025 NCPH Annual Meeting in Montréal, Québec, Canada, on Saturday, March 29, during the Awards Breakfast and Keynote.

OUTSTANDING PUBLIC HISTORY PROJECT AWARD

NCPH acknowledges the generous support of Stevie and Ted Wolf that makes this award possible. NCPH is devastated to learn of Stevie Wolf's death in December 2024. We will honor her legacy by continuing to recognize the best in public history.

LARGE INSTITUTION AWARD WINNER

Rob DeHart, Tudor Place Historic House & Garden; *Ancestral Spaces: People of African Descent at Tudor Place*



Photo credit to Tudor Place Historic House & Garden © 2024

LARGE INSTITUTION HONORABLE MENTION

Donna Graves, Independent Historian and Urban Planner, and Elizabeth Villano, National Park Service; History & Hope for Climate Action: An Interpretive Toolkit for the National Park Service



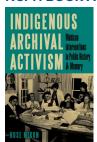
SMALL
INSTITUTION
AWARD WINNER
Carly Adams,
University of
Lethbridge; Darren
Aoki, University
of Plymouth
(United Kingdom):
and Michelle

Day Miles, Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden; Co-Creating Southern Alberta Japanese Canadian Histories: The Bunka Centre and Nikkei Memory Capture Project Heritage Collaboration

SMALL INSTITUTION HONORABLE MENTION

Board of Directors: Christopher Carmona, Our Lady of the Lake University; Juan Carmona, Donna High School; Benjamin Heber Johnson, Loyola University; Sonia Hernández, Texas A&M University; Leah LaGrone, Weber State University; Monica Muñoz Martinez, University of Texas at Austin; John Morán González, University of Texas at Austin; and Annette M. Rodríguez, University of Texas at Austin; Refusing to Forget

NCPH BOOK AWARD



Rose Miron, Newberry Library; Indigenous Archival Activism: Mohican Interventions in Public History and Memory (University of Minnesota Press, 2024)

G. WESLEY JOHNSON AWARD

For the best article in *The Public Historian*.

Benjamin Jenkins, National Archives and Records Administration and Independent Public History Researcher, for "Recasting Uncle Billy: r/ShermanPosting, Digital History, and the Meaning of the American Civil War in the Twenty-First Century," *The Public Historian* Vol 46, No 1

GRASSROOTS PUBLIC HISTORY AWARD - MONTRÉAL



Remy Chhem, Marie-Ève Samson, and Eva-Loan Ponton-Pham; Super Boat People Collective

HONORABLE MENTION

Je Suis Montréal, represented by **Taïna Mueth**

EXCELLENCE IN CONSULTING AWARD GROUP AWARD



Plays in Place LLC, represented by Patrick Gabridge

INDIVIDUAL AWARD

Kabria Baumgartner, Northeastern University; *Recovering Black History in Keene,* New Hampshire

STUDENT PROJECT AWARD





Staci
Batchelor, University of North
Carolina Charlotte; Reflection,
Resilience, and Restoration: 40
Years of Women's and Gender
Studies at UNC Charlotte

HONORABLE MENTION

Phoenix McClellan, St. Mary's College; LGBTQ Center of South Bend Oral History and Poster Exhibit

DIVERSITY TRAVEL AWARD

Vanessa Hines, The Stagville Memorial Project, Durham, North Carolina

Susan Huynh, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

NEW PROFESSIONAL TRAVEL AWARDS

HRA NEW PROFESSIONAL TRAVEL AWARD

Alyssa Moore, Intrepid Museum

NCPH NEW PROFESSIONAL TRAVEL AWARD

Noah G. Price, World Heritage USA

GRADUATE STUDENT TRAVEL AWARDS

Mila Kaut, Northwestern University

Connor Joseph, University of Kansas

Alison Moon, Washington State University

Kayley Schacht, Indiana University Indianapolis

James Sun, University of California, Berkeley

NCPH awards and travel grants are possible in part due to your donations to the NCPH Endowment. To help support these awards, and help us to grow our future award and travel grant offerings, please consider giving: http://ncph.org/giving/endowment.

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