NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PUBLIC HISTORY

Ballots were distributed by email to members on November 9. Please contact ncph@ncph.org if you are a member and did not receive a ballot.

View current NCPH Board Members: https://ncph.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/26-27-NCPH-Board.pdf

2027 Election – Candidates

Board of Directors

(Vote for up to **three (3)** 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, 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, nine other elected members, one elected student representative, and with the executive director and *The Public Historian* editor serving as ex officio, non-voting members.)



Ashley Bouknight
National Trust for Historic Preservation

What of NCPH's interests and/or values are you most excited to promote, and how do you intend to do that?
If elected, I'm most excited to advance NCPH's advocacy and strengthen cooperative relationships with other history organizations. We are in an era that calls for a return to the "village" model of interdisciplinary collaboration. Preserving our most sacred memories and materials depends on our ability to celebrate and leverage skill sets across the professional spectrum.

What's your short bio?
I'm a whimsical weirdo fighting the good fight to teach communities how to save their family histories. I'm a community educator and museum consultant for museums, historic sites, and neighborhood history projects across the Southeast. My research focuses on collections management theory, intersectionality and inclusivity in museums, and community outreach. Before my current role, I served as a Curator at Andrew Jackson's Hermitage for nearly a decade and as the Senior Manager of Professional Development for the American Association for State and Local History.

Tell us what you do now and why you do it:
I am currently a Senior Manager of Preservation Practice in the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation (Yes, we say the WHOLE thing 🙂). In this role, I co-lead the Descendants and Family Stewardship Initiative, where we help African American descendant- and family-led sites maintain their properties by creating individualized stewardship plans.

What's your NCPH origin story?
I attended my first NCPH conference in 2006 to present my thesis project during the poster session. I've been involved with NCPH ever since.

What has your involvement been with NCPH?
In addition to attending the conferences since 2006, I've served on several awards committees and as a 2020 Conference Co-Chair. (This one still hurts a little.)

Why should other people care about public history?
Public history isn't just about translating academic research for the general public; it's also about providing tools that help people save their own stories.

What is something about your personal life you feel comfortable sharing?
I'm a new Trekkie and will talk about it for hours!



Sheila Brennan
Digital Scholar

What of NCPH's interests and/or values are you most excited to promote, and how do you intend to do that?
Openness, transparency, and co-creation are among the many NCPH values that I share. My own work to develop and share open access resources and open-source software, rests on the strong belief that public historians must enable communities to do the work they want, in the ways they want. Advancing this belief requires us to advocate for the independence and integrity of our professionalism and our institutions, and I am excited to work with NCPH to continue this critical work.

What's your short bio?
I am a digital public historian with nearly thirty years of experience working in museums, higher education, and federal grantmaking. I completed my PhD in history at George Mason University, while working at the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media. There, I collaborated on dozens of digital public history projects, including the Hurricane Digital Memory Bank, Histories of the National Mall, and the Omeka online publishing platform, and trained scores of humanists in digital methods.

Tell us what you do now and why you do it:
I have recently returned to my roots to work as the Director of Institutional Relations at Digital Scholar, a non-profit that develops and sustains free and open-source software, including Omeka and Zotero. I am committed to enabling individuals and communities to do digital cultural heritage work that matters to them, in the ways that support their cultural values and ethics.

What's your NCPH origin story?
At my first NCPH conference in 2010, I co-facilitated an Omeka workshop and the Digital-Jump Start working group. Those hands-on sessions generated enthusiasm, and helped me to find life-long collaborators also interested in using digital technologies to create open and accessible public history projects. This welcoming group of established practitioners did not care about gatekeeping, but instead approached this new area of practice with curiosity and generosity.

What has your involvement been with NCPH?
Since that first meeting, I have presented my research, led more workshops, and participated in peer-to-peer learning during THATCamps, Digital Drop-In sessions, and Speed Networking at many NCPH

conferences. I also served on the Nominating Committee from 2012-2015 where I appreciated the opportunity to shape inclusive slates of candidates for the organization's leadership roles.

Why should other people care about public history?
Everyone should care about public history, because it acknowledges that the historical places, storytelling practices, and artifacts we encounter in our everyday lives shape our understanding of the present and past. People matter in the telling, recording, and preserving of our diverse pasts, and we need more institutional support across sectors to support these efforts.

What is something about your personal life you feel comfortable sharing?
While most of my work centers on the digital, in my free time, I enjoy getting away from screens and going outside to jog, hike, bird, or sit on the deck reading a paperback.



Thomas Cauvin
University of Luxembourg

What of NCPH's interests and/or values are you most excited to promote, and how do you intend to do that?
I want to help connect NCPH's interests and values to the rich international networks of public historians. NCPH is not alone. In a global context of hardships, it is crucial to build alliances and partnerships that help us defend and support safe, inclusive and meaningful public history committed to common good, human rights, and democratic participation.

What's your short bio?
Born in France, I have worked for more than 20 years as an educator in schools, higher education and public history sites. Member and past president of the International Federation for Public History—a network that connects public historians all around the world—I have practiced and taught public history in the United States (Louisiana and Colorado) and Europe (France, Italy, Ireland, and now Luxembourg).

Tell us what you do now and why you do it: Based at the Centre for Contemporary and Digital History in Luxembourg, I devote most of my energy to connecting and supporting people who care about and practice public history around the world. I am driven by the idea of bridging people, communities, and public history institutions across borders and disciplines.

What's your NCPH origin story?
My first NCPH conference (Pensacola, 2011) was also my first real experience in the United States. Little did I know in Pensacola that our session on international public history would draw such a large, enthusiastic audience that it would lead to the creation of the International Federation for Public History.

What has your involvement been with NCPH?
Even after I returned to Europe in 2020, I kept coming to NCPH conferences because they have always given me hope and inspired me to make history more alive and inclusive. Both as a liaison officer for the International Federation for Public History and as a member of the NCPH's Curriculum and Training Committee, I have felt part of a big family to which I now want to bring back the support they always provided.

Why should other people care about public history?
People care about public history because it belongs to them and relates to their past. Making public history is more than knowledge; it reminds us that history is a collective human-driven experience of living together.

What is something about your personal life you feel comfortable sharing?
I love running and always bring my running shoes to NCPH's events, so who knows, I may meet some of you in the streets of St. Louis.



Caroline Dugan
Zion National Park

What of NCPH's interests and/or values are you most excited to promote, and how do you intend to do that?
I'm most excited about NCPH's values to educate the public and future public historians, work with communities, and practice respect and inclusiveness. I think these all go hand in hand, as everyone's community and history is important and deserves to be respected, documented, and shared with the public for education. I hope to create a safe place to do so.

What's your short bio?
I have an undergraduate degree in History and Political Science from Louisiana State University. I recently obtained a graduate degree in Public History from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, and I am currently pursuing a second masters part-time in Library and Information Sciences. I have a cross-interest research focus in women, gender, and sexuality, as well as experience with museums, archives, and libraries where I explore historic preservation, archival silences, and exclusionary practices surrounding underrepresented figures and movements.

Tell us what you do now and why you do it:
I currently work at Zion National Park as an Education and Interpretation Assistant. I create history programs, waysides, and other content through Conservation Legacy. I started here last February, and it has been a once in a lifetime opportunity. As a Geology and STEM-focused park, Zion has a lack of history programs, waysides, and content, so my job is to work to bridge that gap and engage with the public in a place-based history setting. My favorite part about my job is working with our junior ranger program; I love getting to see kids become fascinated with a history program on a well-known science topic.

What's your NCPH origin story?
I first joined NCPH in 2024, from then on, I have learned a lot and met new colleagues and board members who encouraged me to join the board. I am very active in the public history world, having experience in government and public institutions, but I am also active with NCPH

What has your involvement been with NCPH?
I facilitated a workshop at both the 2025 NCPH Montréal conference and the 2024 Condition Report: The State of Public History in the South NCPH Mini-Con, as well as being on the First Round Program Committee for the 2026 AASLH/NCPH Joint Conference. This year, I was also able to attend the AASLH/ NCPH conference in Providence on behalf of my current position at Zion National Park.

Why should other people care about public history?
I truly believe that public history is the most authentic type of history. It's connecting and engaging with people at their level of knowledge.

What is something about your personal life you feel comfortable sharing?
I try out a new hobby every year! Last year, it was pottery, and this year I picked up paddle boarding.



Torren Gatson
Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University

What of NCPH's interests and/or values are you most excited to promote, and how?
I am most excited about the future of both the field and this organization. I see that future embodied in the students we mentor, whose work will shape the continued growth and evolution of public history, and in our commitment to strategic, long-range planning. I believe thoughtful planning is foundational to building a sustainable, dynamic organization that not only advances the profession but also creates meaningful, lasting opportunities for the next generation of public historians and preservation professionals.

What's your short bio?
I am an Associate Professor of History and Public History and Associate Director of the MTSU Center for Historic Preservation. I chose this profession because public history brings together cultural landscapes, material culture, and the historical record to create powerful opportunities for public education. My current role allows me to advance this mission while training and mentoring the next generation of public historians.

What's your NCPH origin story?
I first began attending NCPH in graduate school while at Middle Tennessee State University. It was mind blowing to see scholars actively engaged in the spirit of true collaboration.

What has your involvement been with NCPH?
I have presented at several NCPH meetings, served on the Program Committee for the conference in Atlanta, Georgia (2023), and delivered the keynote address at the Awards Breakfast that year. I have also brought numerous students to NCPH conferences and overseen their poster presentations, supporting their professional development and engagement with the broader public history community.

Why should other people care about public history?
People should care about public history because of its tremendous potential to preserve, interpret, and communicate the diverse histories that shape American life and culture. Public history is both a profession and a powerful tool for education, creating opportunities for the public to engage with the past through material culture, historic landscapes, and shared narratives. At its core, public history bridges the gap between historical scholarship and public understanding, making history more accessible, meaningful, and relevant to contemporary society.

What is something about your personal life you feel comfortable sharing?
I was born and raised in Wilmington, Delaware which I believe is a superpower in public history because of the immense opportunities I grew up with seeking out museums, historic sites, and State parks throughout the Mid-Atlantic area.



Jen Morán
Latinos in Heritage Conservation

What of NCPH's interests and/or values are you most excited to promote, and how do you intend to do that?
The NCPH value I most want to advance is working with communities, particularly through a Chicana feminist approach that questions whose knowledge counts as history and who has the authority to shape its interpretation. To me, this means recognizing communities as authorities on their own histories, instead of simply including their stories in narratives constructed by others. If elected, I would advocate for equitable access to resources, professional development, and collaborative practices that help public historians put these principles into practice.

What's your short bio?
I am a Chicana public historian and PhD candidate in History at Washington State University, where my research draws on Chicana feminist theory and decolonial methodologies to examine memory, historical knowledge, and interpretation. My background in archives and education informs how I connect historical scholarship with public history practice.

Tell us what you do now and why you do it.
As the Public Historian at Latinos in Heritage Conservation, I manage the Latinx Preservation Toolkit and develop oral history initiatives, community archives, and educational resources that support communities in documenting and preserving their histories. I do this work because I believe historical knowledge should be accessible and useful to the people whose experiences shape it.

What's your NCPH origin story?
My introduction to NCPH was at the 2018 annual meeting in Las Vegas, where I co-presented a poster on education and archives as a graduate student. That experience helped me recognize how my interests in archives, education, and public engagement fit within a broader understanding of public history and its possibilities.

What has your involvement been with NCPH?
I have remained an NCPH member since 2018 and recently developed a proposal for a structured conversation at the 2027 annual meeting, which has been accepted. The session will examine the Abuelas Archive and questions of community authority, ethical stewardship, and decolonial archival practice.

Why should other people care about public history?
Public history matters because how we understand the past shapes what we value, what we preserve, and how we envision our future. It also helps people understand that their families, communities, and lived experiences are part of history and that they have a role in shaping how those histories are remembered and shared.

What is something about your personal life you feel comfortable sharing?
I am an avid sewist and have been sewing for over 30 years, ever since my grandmother taught me as a child.

Board of Directors - Student Representative

(You may vote for up to **one (1)** individual. The NCPH Student Board member will serve a three-year term. The NCPH board defines and advances the organization's mission, protects its financial and human assets, ensures adequate resources, supervises and supports the executive director, and promotes the interests, programs, and reputation of NCPH.



Kenedy Manuel
IU Indianapolis + Polklore Museum, the Harrison Center

What of NCPH's interests and/or values are you most excited to promote, and how do you intend to do that?
The NCPH values that I am most interested in are "Stewarding Resources Responsibly and Equitably" and "Working with Communities" which go in tandem. It is important for public historians to do community informed work that not only educates but invites the public to participate in history and its resources together.

What's your short bio?
I am Kenedy Manuel, a current public history and library science dual degree graduate student at IU Indianapolis. I have always been passionate about history as long as I can remember and was a true "library kid." I would love to continue the legacy of empowering people with stories just as much as I was.

Tell us what you do now and why you do it.
I work for the Harrison Center as the Polklore Museum Manager and Community Liaison. I love the intersection of neighborhood historic preservation, art, and community-based programming.

What's your NCPH origin story?
I remember when I first became aware of NCPH in undergrad and was so honored it was headquartered in Indianapolis, my hometown! It definitely was a draw with deciding on IU Indianapolis for graduate school. I met Sierra Van Ryck deGroot at my public history program orientation and heard about the position there.

Why should other people care about public history?
We all have connections to the past and people are wanting to understand how to interact with it and why it matters. If we don't care about it, we don't create space for thoughtful conversations, identities, narratives, and stories of the past to inform our present and future.

What is something about your personal life you feel comfortable sharing?
I write poetry and love reading and running a book club!



<u>Emily Gracielle Rodriguez</u>
University of Texas, San Antonio (Recent Alum) & Prospective PhD student

What of NCPH's interests and/or values are you most excited to promote, and how do you intend to do that?
I am most excited to engage with NCPH's mission to foster collaboration and public engagement through public history and activism. Through critical reflection on past, present, and future historiographical consciousness, I hope to contribute to a community committed to enriching community-entered praxis by facilitating spaces and providing toolkits tailored to more inclusive pedagogical spaces.

What's your short bio?
Emily Gracielle Rodriguez (She/They) is a self-identifying *nepantlera/e*. They were born and raised between the Rio Bravo, where Laredo, Texas, and Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, Mexico, meet. They lead in academia with queer Borderland communities at the front of every thought and discussion.

Tell us what you do now and why you do it.
I am a current prospective PhD student who seeks doctoral study that focuses on queer Latine community-authored digital archives for social justice and liberation. Overall, I seek to facilitate more inclusive spaces for Queer people of color within borderland spaces, where I call home and continue to advocate and organize through grassroots work and academia.

What's your NCPH origin story?
My NCPH origin story started after a late-night *Sonic* trip. As I enjoyed my *Oreo cheesecake blast*, I noticed a missed email informing me of my nomination to the Student Board Member position. As a recent graduate and first-gen Latine student, moments like these when your hard work is noticed feel incredibly special. So, I enthusiastically sent my acceptance email and immediately called my *abuelita* to share the good news.

Why should other people care about public history?
Public history is an interdisciplinary practice deeply rooted in community collaboration that fosters more accessible spaces and inclusive histories. Most importantly, public history encompasses more just and accurate histories created by *us* for *us.*

What is something about your personal life you feel comfortable sharing?
I am the proud *Big Sister General* to my siblings, Chuy and Tetel, and though I am their eldest sister, they continue to teach me some of life's most meaningful lessons as we grow together.

Nominating Committee

(Vote for up to **two (2)** 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 year, the committee compiles the slate of candidates for the annual election.)



Tzu-I Chung
Museum of Anthropology at University of British Columbia

What of NCPH's interests and/or values are you most excited to promote, and how?
I'm most excited to promote NCPH's commitment to inclusive public history practiced with communities, not just for them. On the Nominating Committee, I would actively seek out candidates whose voices are underrepresented in leadership, including community-based practitioners, museum workers, and colleagues working beyond the United States. I see building a strong slate as relationship work, and I'd approach it that way.

What's your short bio?
I'm Curator of Public Programs and Engagement at the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, a cultural and social historian of transnational migration, and a member of the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board. My work centres on community-led heritage projects with diasporic and Indigenous communities, resulting in exhibitions, curricula, public programs, and publications. I was named an Exemplary Diversity Scholar by the University of Michigan's National Center for Institutional Diversity and received the BC Museums Association's Distinguished Service Award.

Tell us what you do now and why you do it:
I create spaces, inside and beyond the museum, where communities share their histories in their own voices. I've always been drawn to the complexity of competing perspectives on who has defined, and who now gets to define, a community's history, culture, and belonging.

What's your NCPH origin story?
I've followed NCPH's work since graduate school. As a museum professional working across many communities and stakeholders, I've found a rare sense of belonging in NCPH's mix of practitioners and scholars who share a deep commitment to public history.

Why should other people care about public history?
What we choose to remember as history shapes how we understand who we are and who belongs. Good public history gives people the tools to ask whose stories have been told and the confidence to join the storytelling, which is a deeply democratic act.

Something about your personal life?
I'm currently obsessed with Krillion and Originle, two daily trivia games that reward knowing the lesser known answers and cultural details.



Jacqueline Hudson
Filson Historical Society

What of NCPH's interests and/or values are you most excited to promote, and how do you intend to do that?
This interest comes in two-fold, but both promote *community*: 1. Joining other practitioners in the field to connect history for the public good and 2. Finding ways to support these practitioners while they are navigating through avenues to do this incredible work.

What's your short bio?
Jacqueline Hudson is a public historian specializing in museum studies, historic preservation, and Black history and culture, with experience in curatorial affairs, exhibition development, public programming, and community engagement. Her scholarship has appeared in *Exhibition* magazine and the *History@Work* blog, and she has spearheaded three successful historical markers in Ohio and one in Kentucky. She currently serves as Curator of the Black Experience at the Filson Historical Society in Louisville.

Tell us what you do now and why you do it:
I lead strategic planning initiatives and oversee the coordination of exhibitions, object collections, and public programming projects that center Black narratives and community engagement. Over the past two years, this work has focused not only on documenting Black history but also on highlighting stories of Black joy, creativity, and resilience.

What's your NCPH origin story?
My origin story was winning the NCPH Diversity Travel Award in 2020; but, you know, the pandemic happened and my first NCPH conference was online. As one of the winners of the award, I had the honor and privilege of writing my first public history piece for *History@Work* about preserving my grandparents' furniture!

Why should other people care about public history?
History happens in our own neighborhoods and communities every day. It is not just about something that happened centuries ago, but also five minutes ago!

What is something about your personal life you feel comfortable sharing?
I have 36 (and counting) tattoos, but each one tells a story about my life (so, I am a historian professionally and personally 😉).



Marcus P. Smith
Black Grassroots Heritage Preservation Network

What of NCPH's interests and/or values are you most excited to promote, and how do you intend to do that?
I value NCPH's commitment to fostering an inclusive, collaborative professional community that brings together public historians working in a wide range of settings. As a member of the Nominating Committee, I hope to build on that commitment by

helping identify and encourage thoughtful, capable leaders who reflect the breadth of our field, including grassroots and community-based practitioners whose work has been central to my own professional experience.

What's your short bio?
I am a public historian, Black studies scholar, and PhD candidate in the W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where my research examines grassroots historic preservation efforts in African American communities. I serve as Deputy Director of the Du Bois Freedom Center in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, which is working to restore the historic Clinton AME Church, built in 1883, as the first museum in North America dedicated to the life, legacy, and scholarship of W.E.B. Du Bois. I am also Founder and Executive Director of the Black Grassroots Heritage Preservation Network, a national nonprofit dedicated to documenting, connecting, and strengthening Black-led preservation efforts across the country, and co-chair of NCPH's Grassroots Public History Award Committee.

Tell us what you do now and why you do it:
Through my scholarship and professional practice, I examine how African American communities preserve their histories and strengthen grassroots preservation efforts nationwide. My commitment to this work began with my grandparents, who shared our family history and made us promise never to sell our ancestral land in Kilmichael, Mississippi, teaching me that preserving history requires not only the transmission of knowledge but also the stewardship of the places that embody it.

What's your NCPH origin story?
I first attended NCPH's annual meeting in 2024 with a Student Travel Award, when I was still finding my footing in the field. Looking back, that experience helped shape the whirlwind of professional opportunities, collaborations, and projects that followed, introducing me to people and ideas that continue to influence how I approach public history today.

Why should other people care about public history?
Public history matters because how we understand the past shapes how we understand ourselves, the world we inhabit, and the future we seek to create. Confronting the silences and contradictions of our history is not merely an academic exercise, but a democratic responsibility: we cannot build the society we aspire to become without first reckoning with the society we have been and the one we remain.

What is something about your personal life you feel comfortable sharing?
Although my professional work focuses on African American history, I have a soft spot for antiquity and medieval history, and outside of work, you can usually find me collecting records, playing video games or tabletop RPGs, or indulging my love of historical dramas, from HBO's *The Gilded Age* and *Rome* to the criminally underrated *Spartacus: Blood and Sand* and *Black Sails*, not to mention the unfortunately canceled *The Serpent Queen*.



Morgen Young
Historical Research Associates, Portland, OR

What of NCPH's interests and/or values are you most excited to promote, and how do you intend to do that?

Working with communities, and promoting co-creation, is a foundational value to NCPH and to my own work as a practicing public historian. I believe that we will be able to counter these ongoing attacks against history by continuing thoughtful, responsible, inclusive, and equitable work with communities.

What is your short bio?
I've been working as a consulting historian for 20 years. My first job in consulting work was for an Alaska Native corporation in Anchorage and that ended up influencing my entire career path – in public history, historical consulting, and collaborating with communities. I started my own business after completing graduate school in the middle of the Great Recession. Ten years ago, I joined Historical Research Associates, Inc., a cultural resources management and history consulting firm, to expand their interpretive service line.

Tell us what you do now and why you do it
I am a principal historian at HRA and lead the company's Public History Program. Much of my work focuses on difficult history, and I follow trauma-informed practices in all aspects of my work, from interpretive planning to oral histories to exhibition development.

What's your NCPH origin story?
My first time attending NCPH was the 2008 annual meeting in Louisville as a grad student from the University of South Carolina. It immediately became my organization, where colleagues became dear friends, and where I did not feel like I was on an island when I was working as a consulting historian.

Why should other people care about public history?
We can use our present understanding of past injustices to build a more just future. We can look at whose voices have been historically silenced or are continuing to be silenced and we can collectively work together to tell more complete stories.

What is something about your personal life you feel comfortable sharing?
I'm an only child and grew up an Army brat, moving nearly every year. That's why I'm so inspired by community co-created history projects—they enable me to use my skills as a public historian, to help communities document and interpret their deep roots, and in turn these projects provide me with connections that I missed early in my own life.