

Melinda McKnight

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Education

Master of Arts, Public History, State University of New York at Albany

Bachelor of Arts, State University of New York at Albany
Major: English Minor: Rhetoric & Communications

Associate of Science, Ulster County Community College
Major: Journalism

Expertise

Workshops & Training Sessions ♦ Research ♦ Management/Administration ♦ Program Development

Professional Experience

12/07-present Public Historian/Researcher/Facilitator, Community Character Consulting West Hurley, NY

- Conduct research on history of communities, industries, property ownership
- Facilitate conversations on topics such as community identity & heritage tourism
- Conduct genealogy research for individuals
- Consult on proper methodology to preserve historic buildings & develop a preservation strategy
- Advise individuals and organizations on proper conditions to preserve documents, photographs etc

2/05 – 11/07 Director, Bevier House Museum, Ulster County Historical Society, Marbletown, NY

- Restructure museum operations in compliance with professional standards of practice
- Supervise all aspects of operations and provide high quality visitor experience
- Develop & implement innovative programs & exhibits on historically significant themes
- Significantly increase museum visitation & community awareness
- Conduct research to use as the basis for an new interpretation resulting in an engaging public tour
- Create flyers, brochures and other promotional materials
- Develop multi-media presentations using MSPowerpoint to encourage support from civic & community groups and conduct training sessions

11/99 – 2/05 Public History Consultant, Terpening & Associates, Port Ewen, NY

- Advise nonprofit agencies about accepted standards of practice
- Research & develop exhibitions and public programs
- Initiate volunteer programs
- Conduct Historical Research
- Research, Develop and Present Research to multi-generational audiences.
- Facilitate Community Meetings, lectures and workshops on a variety of topics including grant writing

10/96 - 10/99 Site Manager, Philipsburg Manor, Historic Hudson Valley, Tarrytown, NY

- Manage daily operations including administer \$450k budget and supervise staff of 25
- Conduct interpretive training and evaluation
- Develop & implement innovative and engaging programs
- Successfully negotiate contracts with performers
- Demonstrate fiscal responsibility by consistently maintaining program budget guidelines thus achieving a profit for all 5 major events annually
- Effectively facilitate monthly staff meetings and issue minutes

- Professionally interact with the general public to ensure quality visitor experience created
- Coordinate site use with a variety of groups and organizations
- Collaborate on various projects with a variety of departments including Marketing, Development, café staff, museum shop, visitor services, custodians, bus drivers, restoration, horticulture and staff of Kykuit, the Rockefeller family's estate.

7/95 - 10/96 Park & Recreation Aide, Senate House State Historic Site, Kingston, NY

- Present engaging education programs both on-site and in schools throughout the Hudson Valley
- Assist Curator with inventory of objects in the collections
- Accurately research the political and social climate of Eighteenth century Kingston
- Compile genealogy relating to the Van Gaasbeek family

6/93 - 7/95 Curator (Interim Director 5/95-8/95), Hudson River Maritime Museum, Kingston, NY

- Oversee daily operation of museum including supervise full and part-time staff, interns & volunteers
- Chaired membership and curatorial committees
- Coordinate public relations activities including quarterly newsletter *Focs'le News* & write press releases
- Appear twice on the regional television show on WTZA's *On the River*
- Conduct interviews with a variety of live radio shows and newspaper reporters to discuss museum activities
- Secure funding for renovation of collections storage and supplies
- Responsible for museum membership program and collections management activities
- Research, develop and install multi-media exhibitions

7/91- 1/95 Director, Klyne Esopus Historical Society Museum, Ulster Park, NY

- Research & develop exhibitions
- Perform collections management activities
- Assist town historian in staffing research library & answering research requests
- Present monthly report for Board of Directors meeting
- Develop and install exhibits

Exhibitions

<i>The Bevier Family & Northern Slavery</i> , Bevier House Museum	2006
<i>The Presidential Campaign of Alton B. Parker</i> , Klyne Esopus Museum	2004
<i>A Walk through History</i> , Klyne Esopus Museum	2003
<i>Boats on the Hudson</i> in Freightmaster's Building at Catskill Point For Greene County Department of Economic Development	2001
<i>Sesquecentennial Exhibition</i> , Reformed Church of Port Ewen	2001
<i>From the Collections of the Vassar Institute</i>	1996
<i>Destination Catskill Mountains</i> (multi-media), Hudson River Maritime Museum	1995
<i>Wrecked & Abandoned: The Sunken Ships of the Rondout and the Hudson</i> Hudson River Maritime Museum	1994

Grants

Awarded GO! Grant for Professional Development, Upstate History Alliance	2007
Awarded funding for "Hands that Pick no Cotton: Hudson Valley Colonial Slavery" Ulster Savings Bank Charitable Foundation, Kingston, New York	2007
Awarded GO! Grant for Professional Development, Upstate History Alliance	2006
Awarded GET SET! Grant for Strategic Planning at UCHS, Upstate History Alliance	2006
Awarded GET READY! Grant for Planning at UCHS, Upstate History Alliance	2005

“Museums for America” Peer Reviewer, Institute of Museum & Library Services, Washington D.C.	2003
Committee member, Capital Campaign Committee, Klyne Esopus Museum	2001
Administered NYSCA re-grant program, Twin Counties Cultural Fund. Presented seminars to potential & returning applicants, created all publications related to the grants program, audited funded programs, wrote all PR, organized various meetings and functions related to the program, developed a manual for panel reviewers.	2000
“Special Opportunity Stipend” Panel Reviewer New York Foundation for the Arts, Troy, NY	2000
“General Operating Support” Peer Reviewer Institute of Museum and Library Services, Washington D.C.	1999
Funding for <i>Destination Catskill Mountains</i> - the Rosenberg Foundation, NY, NY	1995
Assisted in writing successful Institute of Museum Services – General Operating Support grant for Hudson River Maritime Museum	1995
Archival Supplies through Hudson River Heritage for Hudson River Maritime Museum	1994

Other Activities

Certified Facilitator, The Virtues Project, www.thevirtuesproject.com	2004-present
Customer Service & Sales, Schneider’s Jewelers, Kingston, NY	2003-2007
Participant, Museum Institute at Sagamore, Raquette Lake, NY	2007
Board Member, Southeastern New York Library Resources Council	2007
Participant, Museum Institute at Sagamore, Raquette Lake, NY	2006
Legislative Appointee, Ulster County Tourism Advisory Board	2006
Adjunct Faculty, Information Literacy, Ulster County Community College	2004-2006
Instructor, Grant writing Basics, Ulster County BOCES	2003-2005
Real Estate Agent, Magic Sage Realty, New Paltz, New York	2002-2004
Facilitator, Strand Community Organization to Rehabilitate the Environment	2002-2003
Vice President, Board of Directors, Klyne Esopus Museum	2000-2004
Guest speaker Edith Macy Conference Center “ <i>Creating Successful Partnerships with Museums: A Case Study</i> ”	1997
Intern, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library	1996
Guest Speaker, AASLH Annual Meeting “ <i>Conservation Assessment Program</i> ”	1995
Assistant to the Town of Esopus Historian	1991 - 1994

Computer Skills

Proficient in MSOffice Suite (including MSPublisher, PowerPoint, Access and Excel), Macromedia Dreamweaver and skilled in all aspects of research.