

# AASLH Leadership in History Awards

<https://aaslh.org/programs/leadership-in-history-awards-2/>

# AASLH Leadership in History Award Program

85 submissions in 2022

53 received awards

Process includes state review, regional review, and national review

The **Award of Excellence** is presented to recognize excellence for projects (including civic engagement, special projects, educational programs, exhibits, publications, etc.), and individual lifetime achievement. This is the main award for which applicants nominate projects or people.

The **Award of Distinction** is a higher level personal award given infrequently and only in recognition of long and very distinguished individual service. Recipients are noted for their contributions to the field of state and local history and are recognized **nationally** as leaders in the profession.

**The Awards Committee may also choose to select candidates from the Award of Excellence winners for additional recognition. You do not apply for these awards directly.**

- The **Albert B. Corey Award** recognizes primarily volunteer-operated historical organizations that best display the qualities of vigor, scholarship, and imagination in their work. Regional chairs may recommend any primarily volunteer organization that is nominated for the Award of Excellence. This is an award made at the discretion of the Awards Committee.
- The Awards Committee also presents the **History in Progress (HIP) Award**, a special additional award for an Award of Excellence winner whose nomination is highly inspirational, exhibits exceptional scholarship, and/or is exceedingly entrepreneurial in terms of funding, partnerships, or collaborations, creative problem solving, or unusual project design and inclusiveness. This is an award made at the discretion of the Awards Committee.

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14 Regions

Regional  
Rep

National  
Chair

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50 States

State  
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Team Members Across  
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Some noteworthy projects submitted to the  
AASLH Leadership in History Awards in 2021

# Begin Again: reckoning with intolerance in Maine

<b>State:</b>	Maine
Organization:	Maine Historical Society
Organization budget:	Over \$1 million
Organization size:	10 - 20 paid full-time staff
Project dates:	May 27 2021 to December 31, 2021
Project budget:	\$239,485
Project category:	Exhibit

Begin Again: reckoning with intolerance in Maine addressed the roots of injustice and discrimination in Maine. It stimulated and supported dialog around race and inequality, in response to events beginning in 2020: a pandemic, political unrest, race-based violence, and economic disparities.

Begin Again acknowledged the legacy of governmental structures based in White male privilege dating to the Doctrines of Christian Discovery and Domination. The lasting impacts of these systems benefit specific settler-colonialists and their descendants, perpetually disadvantaging other peoples today.

### Begin Again: reckoning with intolerance in Maine photographs



ist Powers,” introduction, and Dunlap Declaration of privilege to the right (colonization and Ulster Scots) path of Scalp bounties).



Exhibit entryway, introduction and Dunlap Declaration of inequity to the left starts with “Life Liberty...” showing



equal” path of privilege discussed the world slave economy processing businesses as culpable in Triangular Trade. Sugar note Maine’s involvement in slavery and colonization.



“We mutually pledge...” explored how slavery and dehumanizing groups like the Ku Klux Klan. A Mainer wore this robe in 1865. 23% of Maine’s population belonged to the KKK. Graphs illustrate the popularity of the hate group and *The Slave Trade* forced Maine’s ties to slavery.

# Dehumanization and Violence

**H**ow do you identify yourself? Probably by different roles based in your family, race, language, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and the expectations that society puts upon you.

Some roles are easily accepted, cemented into the infrastructure of the United States—first through the Doctrines of Christian Discovery and Domination and later to the U.S.

government's preference toward wealthy, straight, White men. Some identities, emboldened by society—religion, kin groups or clans, class, governments and laws—use varying levels of force to control people. Over the past 500 years in what is now known as Maine, stereotypes and laws have created a system of lasting discrimination and intolerance, often seen as harmless until it explodes into mob violence.

Wabanaki people have been dehumanized as "savages," victims of state-sanctioned genocide, their children have been stolen and adopted into White homes to force assimilation, and there is an epidemic of violence against Indigenous women.

Catholics, Jews, and people of varied faiths, along with immigrants and Black people have faced slurs, been expelled from towns, and were tarred and feathered to enforce compliance—often at the hands of hate groups like the "Know Nothings," the predecessors of the Ku Klux Klan.

Patriarchal laws, discrimination, and sexism have impeded the ability of women, gender non-conforming, and LGBTQ+ people to fully participate in society. Those who stepped out of line often saw brutal consequences, but have also worked to change Maine's laws and norms, bending toward a more equitable system.



Geo Soctomah Neptune  
@passamahottie

Some people are shocked at the comments that have been made about me in the past few days.

These remarks aren't new, but are a nearly every day occurrence.

You're acting like it's just a bunch of hateful people online.

This is what it's like to go grocery shopping.

8:32 PM · 9/14/20 · Twitter for iPhone

Geo Neptune (Passamaquoddy) became the first openly transgender official in Maine after being elected to the school board in Indian Township in September 2020. They experienced extreme online abuse from across the globe.  
Courtesy of Geo Neptune

## Reverend Thomas Smith and scalp bounties

By Angus Ferguson, Esq. & Kristina Minister, PhD

In 1755, when Maine was part of Massachusetts, an official Proclamation by Lieutenant Governor Phips of Massachusetts offered:

<b>50 POUNDS</b> for every male <i>Penobscot Indian</i> above the age of 12 years taken alive	<b>40 POUNDS</b> for every scalp of a male <i>Penobscot</i> <i>Indian</i> above the age of 12	<b>25 POUNDS</b> for every female <i>Penobscot Indian</i> taken and brought in and for every male prisoner under the age of 12 years	<b>20 POUNDS</b> for every scalp of such female <i>Indian</i> or male <i>Indian</i> under 12 years of age
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**A**t Falmouth Neck (now Portland), the Reverend Thomas Smith, pastor of First Parish Church, responded to the call for sanctioned violence against the Wabanaki. In 1757, Smith and prominent members of the church equipped a posse of 16 men. These "scouters and cruisers" were sent to "kill and captivate the Indian Enemy" to the east of Falmouth in the area between the Kennebec and Penobscot Rivers. Shortly after, Reverend Smith noted in his journal the receipt of 198 British pounds for "my part of the scalp money"—equal to one-quarter of his salary.

Smith and other English colonists who founded First Parish Church not only organized genocide of the Native people, they strove to grow personal fortunes by populating Maine with White settlers. The 1755 Proclamation offering bounties to hunt and kill Penobscots was but one of dozens of such programs in the Massachusetts Colony's campaign of "ethnic cleansing" targeting the Wabanaki all across the Northeast region during Reverend Smith's lifetime.

The real history of how Maine came to be 95% owned and populated by people who identify as White is encapsulated in the obscured, early history of First Parish, and the profitable investment by a few wealthy church members and their pastor in the government-sanctioned, systematic dispossession, and genocide of Wabanaki people.

## Why is Maine so White?

**W**ithin a few days of moving to Portland in 2014, I first heard the phrase "from away." To me, a new Black Mainer, the use of the phrase seemed alienating and designed to reinforce the demographic profile that keeps Maine listed as one of the Whitest states in the Union.

When a Maine Public Radio listener posed the question, *Why is Maine so White?* in 2019 the initial response pointed to the lack of plantation farming inferring that Maine's reliance on "forestry, shipbuilding and textile and mill industries" made it immune to slavery.

Blacks have been in Maine since the first settler colonialists arrived. Even though Maine was established as a free state under the Missouri Compromise in 1820, slavery was present since the 1600s in Maine and Mainers continued to benefit from slavery elsewhere in the U.S. and around the world after statehood.

Despite being home to prominent abolitionists such as General Oliver Howard or Samuel Fessenden, in general, White Mainers were not immune to the lure of slavery or to the narratives that dehumanized the enslaved. This response raises its own set of complexities and exposes Maine's dual identities that exist today.



Signs from Black Lives Matter protests in Portland, June 9, 2020  
Courtesy of Joanne Arnold, MaineMemory.Net/mymainestory/BLMsigns

Maine is where Macon Bolling Allen, the first Black attorney in the United States, was admitted into practice on July 3, 1844. Maine is also the place where the multi-racial community of Malaga Island residents was forcibly removed by the governor's edict in 1912.

Maine is the home of the 20th Maine Infantry Regiment which, despite impossible odds (and no ammunition), refused to retreat in the face of Confederate soldiers. Their courage and heroism played a decisive role in the Battle of Gettysburg and the Union victory in the Civil War. And, Maine is the place where, just a few miles outside of its major cities like Portland, Lewiston-Auburn, or Bangor the Confederate flag is prominently displayed.

Maine is a state with two conflicting identities—which Maine will win? The Maine that will be remembered by future generations is the Maine that we choose to nurture now.

— Krystal Williams, Co-Curator



# When Women Lost the Vote: A Revolutionary Story, 1776-1807

<b>State:</b>	Pennsylvania
<b>Organization:</b>	Museum of the American Revolution
<b>Organization budget:</b>	Over \$1 million
<b>Organization size:</b>	More than 20 paid full-time staff
<b>Project dates:</b>	October 2, 2020 - April 25, 2021
<b>Project budget:</b>	Expenses: \$990,273
<b>Project category:</b>	Exhibition

When Women Lost the Vote: A Revolutionary Story, 1776-1807 explored the untold stories of the generation of women and people of color who legally voted in New Jersey during the Revolutionary era and inspired later generations of suffragists. The exhibition also presented a timely cautionary tale about one of America's first voting rights crises and served an important reminder that protecting our rights and freedoms—and those of others—requires constant vigilance.



# Death in the West: The Murder of Frank Little

<b>State:</b>	<b>Montana</b>
Organization:	Death in the West, LLC
Organization budget:	All Volunteer
Organization size:	4 people
Project dates:	August 2020-December 2020
Project budget:	Under \$50,000
Project category:	Multimedia (Podcast)

Death in the West is an independent history podcast project. The first season, "The Murder of Frank Little," is ten episodes long. The episodes are scripted and include narration, interviews with historians, oral histories, archival sound, field recordings and professionally scored music.

"The Murder of Frank Little" tells the story of Frank Little, a radical union organizer who was lynched in Butte, Montana in 1917. No one was ever convicted of his murder, but many people suspected that the powerful Anaconda Mining Company was to blame.

To make the story engaging, interviews, field recordings and music are used and most importantly, oral histories allow listeners to experience the past through the words of people who were there – to hear their accents and vocal rhythms, their ways of constructing stories, and the pain, anger, and laughter in their voices.



# The Bob Ross Experience

<b>State:</b>	Indiana
Organization:	Minnetrista Museum & Gardens
Organization budget:	Over \$1 million
Organization size:	More than 20 paid full-time staff
Project dates:	Opened between October 2020 and October 2021
Project budget:	\$804,460
Project category:	Exhibition



Bob Ross inspired generations of individuals from a small, unassuming public television studio in Muncie, Indiana. Through his soft-spoken style and pallet knife he taught both a painting technique and a life philosophy. By making art accessible he encouraged people to reframe how they thought about their mistakes, abilities, and self-expression. Minnetrista amplified Bob's message of fearless creativity with the opening of the "Bob Ross Experience."

# KKK Ledgers Rollout Project

<b>State:</b>	Colorado
Organization:	History Colorado
Organization Budget:	Over \$1 million
Organization size:	More than 20 paid full-time staff
Project dates:	Jan 2021-Feb 2022
Project budget:	\$10,613.90
Project category:	Multimedia



The Ku Klux Klan controlled Colorado in the early 1920s. But, one-hundred years on, few Coloradans remember the full extent of the Klan's reach. Early in 2021, History Colorado digitized and published two KKK membership ledgers from our collection.

The ledgers tracked membership in the Denver Klavern between 1922 and 1924 and were digitized as part of our commitment to name and investigate systems of historical racial and ethnic discrimination.

In 2021, History Colorado published searchable scans of the ledgers online, so that anyone with an internet connection could access this history. Along with the ledgers, History Colorado created an interactive map of addresses in order to help visitors understand the immense scope and distribution of Klan membership in Denver.

[142]

Number	Name	Residence Address	Phone	Business Address	Phone	Paid To	D. & P.
14114	Gronm, Wm Secor	568 South Williams St	So 7687 R				R-11
14115	<del>Mahoney, Carl Law</del>	<del>473 Corona</del>	<del>S 6018 W</del>	<del>473 Corona</del>	<del>S 6018 W</del>		L-15
14116	Gum, Chas L	349 So Sherman	S 4257 J	1631 California	C 3000		S-10
14117	Looney, Guy Horace	2614 W 29th Ave	G 4078 J	Union Depot			B-13
14118	Myers, John Franklin	451 South Pearl	S 2401 R	451 So Pearl	S 2401 R		R-6
14119	Miller, Chas F	<sup>583 Marion</sup> <del>510 Corona St</del>	S 1111 W	313 Cham of Com Bldg	M 4444		L-13
14120	Lesenea, Charlie F	3131 West 44th Ave	G 2549 M	3131 W 44th Ave	G 2549 M		a-5
14121	Lovell, Robert L	1632 Tremont Place	C 8241	D & R G R R & A R REX Co			g-9
14122	Leeman, Robert J	2417 W 29th Ave	G 120 W	3000 Zuni	G 250		B-13
14123	Pettee, Orris Knapp	2125 Lafayette	Y 3248 W	Oppheum Theatre			E-13
14124	Tennis, Carl	West Court Hotel	C 1415	1534 California	C 77		g-3
14125	Knott, Ward Austin	West Cou t Hotel	C 1415	860 G & E Bldg	M 5886		g-3
14126	McFarland, Arnold Lemond	630 East 20th Ave	C 5885 W	St Lukes Garage			g-1
14127	Stapp, Ellsworth Logan	4611 West 38th Ave	G 1403 J	313 Cham of Com Bldg	M 4444		a-6
14128	Bliss, Harold Higgins	1674 Steele St	Y 3903 W	1351 Court Place	M 7696		O-2
14129	Titus, Chas Willard	1673 Fillmore		Assessors Office			O-1
14130	Young, Jas E	1767 Vine		535 Symes Bldg	M 5711		M-2
14131	Lindsey, Jas G	243 West 4th Ave	S 6145 J	Fed Reserve Bank	C 7400		R-13
14132	Brooks, Clarence S	116 Kalamath St	S 7883 M	1045 Larimer	M 1150		S-3
14133	Young, Harvey A	Fitzsimons Gen Hospital	Aur 800	Fitzsimons Gen Hos	Aurora800		
14134	Morris, John Bradford	1754 Lawrence St	C 8924 W	2727 W 27th Ave	G 913		H-4
14135	Jackson, Jos Everett	<del>2003 Ogden</del>	<del>Y 7936 W</del>	City Hall	M 234 F		J-3



# Peyii 'Enyeway 'Esekaayches! We Are Still Here!

<b>State:</b>	California
<b>Organization:</b>	Barona Cultural Center & Museum
<b>Organization Budget:</b>	\$250k - 500k
<b>Organization size:</b>	3 - 10 paid full-time staff
<b>Project dates:</b>	June 2021/January 2023
<b>Project budget:</b>	\$3,150
<b>Project category:</b>	Civic engagement



Peyii 'Enyeway 'Esekaayches! is an exhibition at Barona Cultural Center & Museum curated by Eighth Grade students at the Barona Indian Charter School. Each spring, K-8 students take Culture Class at the Museum to enrich their knowledge and understanding of the Kumeyaay People, the original people of what is now San Diego, CA. These classes culminate with a Heritage Project the Eighth Grade students create as a legacy for those who come after. During the course of Culture Class, under the tutelage of our Museum Director, students engaged in an in-depth review of Kumeyaay history to formulate a timeline beginning with Creation to present.

This exhibition is in a linear, timeline form for ease of consumption, and supplemented with cultural material from the museum's collection. While the content may be new or surprising for some visitors, this exhibition is a valuable resource to both the Native and Non-Native communities. This comprehensive timeline is the first of its kind in Kumeyaay territory and has proven to be beneficial to the People, elevating their lesser-known history, not taught in California public schools, and as a means of education for our Non-Native visitors who are persuaded to remove their Western lenses, and learn our perspective, our way of knowing.

The Eighth Graders executed an impressive amount of scholarship, synthesized the material into label copy; printed, trimmed and mounted labels; painted walls; came in after school on their own time to further the project; and practiced giving docent-led tours to Community members. During COVID, with a limited budget, this was no easy task. The community has embraced this project because of the powerful content--Kumeyaay history from the Kumeyaay perspective. Kumeyaay People have been here since our Creator put us here. Our Ancestors butchered that mastodon paleontologists found. The Supreme Court told the anthropologists their theories don't stand up. It was genocide. It was assimilation. Our land was stolen. We are still here.

# Crossing Boundaries: Portraits of a Transgender West, 1860-1940

<b>State:</b>	Washington
Organization:	Washington State Historical Society
Organization Budget:	Over \$1 million
Organization size:	More than 20 paid full-time staff
Project dates:	May 29, 2021 - December 12, 2021
Project budget:	\$44,745
Project category:	Exhibition

# Dr. Alan L. Hart

Alan Hart was born in Kansas in 1890 and was assigned female. After Hart's father died in 1892, his mother took him to Albany, Oregon, to live with her family. As he grew up, Hart preferred boys' games and doing chores associated with boys and young men. He developed crushes on girls and female teachers. After he left home for Stanford University in 1910, Hart began to experiment with wearing male clothing and pursuing relationships with women.



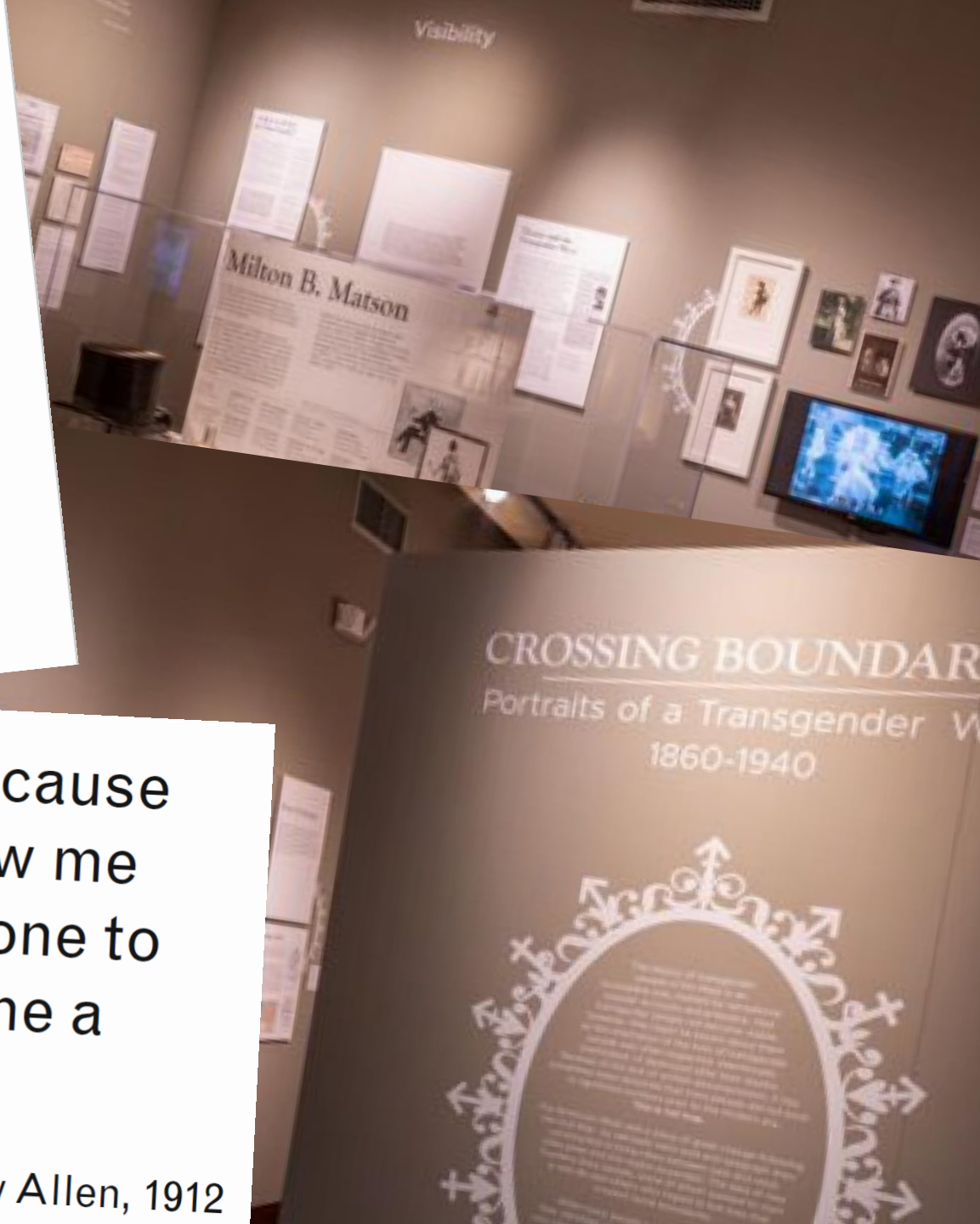
Dr. Alan L. Hart, about 1930

**Woman's Idea of "Dress Reform."**  
ALBANY, Or., March 30.—(To the Editor.)—There has been so much discussion of late in the press and in the magazines by men concerning what sort of clothes a woman ought to be allowed to wear, that it seems to me it would do no harm for one woman to say what she thinks about the subject. It is, of course, possible that no

In 1913, Hart entered the University of Oregon's Medical College after graduating from Albany College, still presenting himself as a woman. When not in classes, he often dressed as a man, pursued relationships with women, and struggled with his feelings about gender and sexuality. As a means of seeking understanding of himself, he had a relationship with a man but had an extreme difficulties he experienced led him to

"They (the press) can't leave me alone. Because I choose to wear men's clothing, they follow me down wherever I go. All I ask is to be let alone to earn an honest living. But they won't give me a chance."

- Harry Allen, 1912



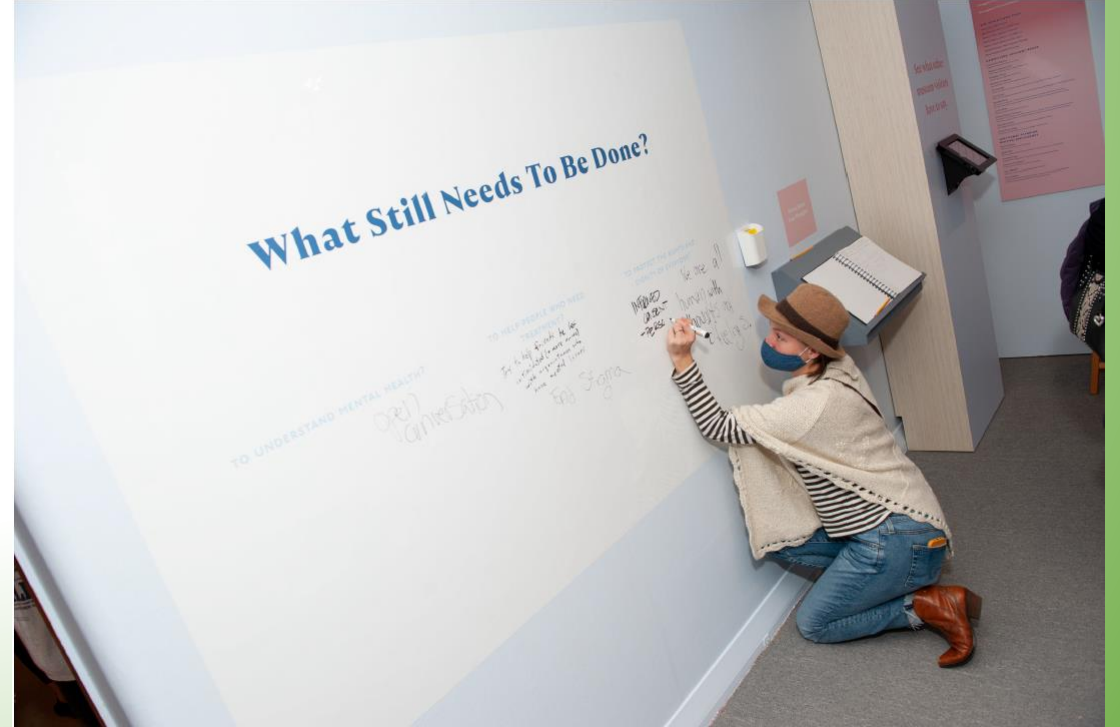
For much of United States history, the lives of transgender people have been obscured in our understanding of the west, relegated to footnotes at best, sensationalized or forgotten at worst. The exhibition "Crossing Boundaries: Portraits of a Transgender West, 1860-1940" was organized by the Washington State Historical Society to bring these stories to the forefront, both to increase the public's knowledge of transgender history and to affirm the lives and identities of our transgender communities.

It was the intention of the Society to present a well-researched history that would provide a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by transgender people during this time, while providing the social, cultural, and legal context in which these lives were lived. Through researching this history, the museum was able to locate stories of transgender individuals locally that will inform not only this exhibition and related programming, but also provide a foundation for other researchers and future exhibition content. The exhibition has also raised awareness among the public that the Society is and has been actively engaged in collecting material related to the LGBTQ+ community.



# Common Struggle, Individual Experience: An Exhibition About Mental Health

<b>State:</b>	Connecticut
Organization:	Connecticut Historical Society
Organization Budget:	Over \$1 million
Organization size:	More than 20 paid full-time staff
Project dates:	Nov 12, 2021 - Oct 15, 2022 (Planning began in 2018)
Project budget:	\$78,876
Project category:	Exhibition



"Common Struggle, Individual Experience: An Exhibition About Mental Health" presents stories and perspectives on mental health from the 1700s to today. Letters, photographs, and other artifacts from the CHS collection help share the experiences of Connecticutans from the past. Stories include Faith Huntington, a wife and mother who died by suicide in 1775; Joseph Orin Cross, a Black Civil War soldier whose letters describe the trauma of war; and Clifford Beers, a healthcare reformer who wrote about the dark side of mental health institutions and opened America's first outpatient mental health clinic in 1913. In 2020–2021, the CHS asked people to share their personal struggles and experiences with mental health. These interviews are presented through videos, photographs, and labels throughout the exhibition. Together, stories from the past and present offer an in-depth and personalized exploration of mental health, mental illness, and mental health care. The project team development established the idea for the overall message of the exhibition: "Learning how people throughout history have grappled with mental health, both individually and collectively, helps us better support one another today."



National Awards Chair: Christy Crisp, Georgia Historical Society, 509 E. 34th St., Savannah, GA 31401-8109, 912-651-2125 x117, [ccrisp@georgiahistory.com](mailto:ccrisp@georgiahistory.com)

Region 1 Regional Chair: Gavin Kleespies, Massachusetts Historical Society, 1154 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02215, [gkleespies@masshist.org](mailto:gkleespies@masshist.org)

Maine: Cynthia Walker, Brick Store Museum, 117 Main Street, Kennebunk, ME 04043, [CWalker@brickstoremuseum.org](mailto:CWalker@brickstoremuseum.org)

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<https://aaslh.org/programs/leadership-in-history-awards-2/>