



NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE  
HUMANITIES

DIVISION OF PRESERVATION AND ACCESS

### **Narrative Section of a Successful Application**

The attached document contains the grant narrative and selected portions of a previously funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the NEH Division of Preservation and Access application guidelines at <https://www.neh.gov/program/cultural-and-community-resilience> for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Preservation and Access staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative and selected portions, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

**Project Title:** 1960s Oral Histories – New York Community Connectors

**Institution:** Museum at Bethel Woods

**Project Director:** Neal V. Hitch

**Grant Program:** Cultural and Community Resilience

NEH CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE  
1960s Oral Histories - New York Community Connectors

**PROJECT NARRATIVE**

**PROJECT GOALS AND HUMANITIES CONTENT**

Through the project, 1960s Oral Histories - New York Community Connectors, the Museum at Bethel Woods will collect, process, and interpret oral histories from a quickly disappearing historical resource: people from disadvantaged communities who attended and participated in counter-cultural activities during the 1960s. The Museum views this material as essential in understanding the importance of social change to freedom. It is also essential to assembling the most accurate and representative first-person account of the 1960s possible. The historic accounts of people who lived through the events and movements of the 1960s, work and family life in the subsequent years, and through COVID-19 as a defining moment of their golden years will only be authentic if it includes diverse stories that illustrate the whole experience.

The Museum embarked on a five-year Oral History Initiative in 2020, as COVID-19 made the importance of recording first-person perspectives of the 1960s more urgent with each passing day. We found that during the pandemic people began contemplating life and legacy. Sharing memories became very important when we lost the ability to gather with loved ones. Opportunities to collect these stories have continued to slip away as the population who remembers 1960s social challenges and changes ages into their 70s and 80s. Eventually, they will die. Many already have since we began the initiative.

The Museum at Bethel Woods interprets and preserves the National Register historic site of the 1969 Woodstock Music and Art Fair. The site represents one of the defining moments in American culture, a moment that has today become synonymous with freedom of expression, peaceful gathering, and the impulse for positive change. The Museum's mission is to interpret the zeitgeist of the 1960s which concluded with the Woodstock festival. The Museum tells the story of the social movements, political history, popular culture, and lasting influences of the 1960s. Collecting first-person stories is key to this mission.

Our oral history collection fits into an existing scholarly field. Books such as Mark Kurlansky's *1968: The Year that Rocked the World*, have detailed counter-cultural movements across the globe. *Woodstock: The Oral History*, by Joel Makower (1968), and *Pilgrims of Woodstock*, by John Kane (2019) are written directly from oral history interviews conducted by the authors to illustrate their theses. Documentaries such as *Woodstock: Three Days That Defined a Generation* (2019), incorporate the use of oral histories to present a specific angle. However, it is the extensive collection of long-form oral histories from average people who participated in the counterculture of the 1960s that we are trying to collect - while there is still time without a specific goal or agenda. Our collection will support not just one thesis about Woodstock, but innumerable ideas, themes, and the patterns of a decade. This will be the defining legacy of the Oral History Collection at The Museum at Bethel Woods.

Between 2008 and 2019 the Museum collected 89 oral histories, mostly from Woodstock musicians or Woodstock promoters. In 2020, taking as a guiding principle that "Woodstock is not one story; it is 450,000 stories," the Museum began the Oral History Initiative, a formalized plan to promote the collection of oral histories from individuals who attended Woodstock. With curator Julia Fell leading this program, between 2020 and 2021 we collected 340 new oral histories. The oral history collection has now expanded to people involved in other counter-cultural events and protests.

In 2021, the Museum completed an analysis of the collection which revealed that 96% of the narrators were white and 65% were male. This data is far from a true representation of the demographics of the 1960s counterculture. Instead, it is far more representative of the demographics that are known to willingly engage with museums. It is clear that the storytellers who could share underrepresented perspectives are not coming to the Museum on their own. They need to be sought out.

In 2022, the Museum was awarded an IMLS grant for a project we called “Woodstock Oral Histories Through Community Connectors.” This grant allowed the Museum team to collect oral histories at locations other than the Museum building or historic site, and to hire consultants to connect us with countercultural communities. Consultants hosted regional oral history pop-ups in the Southwest and on the West Coast. These programs doubled the number of oral histories in the collection by adding 250 new interviews from narrators we otherwise would not have reached.

The Woodstock Oral Histories Through Community Connectors project showed that connecting with a consultant or institution that has already built trust within a community allows access to members of the counterculture with diverse experiences that otherwise would not be available to the Museum at Bethel Woods. The 1960s Oral Histories - New York Community Connectors project seeks to expand the oral history collection at the Museum at Bethel Woods with the perspectives of African Americans and other communities of color, and LGBTQ+ communities in New York. This project will partner with a variety of locally and culturally embedded museums in New York City, the Cooperstown Graduate Program, and two consultants to collect 120 oral histories from disadvantaged communities that offer direct insight into the history of resilience from the 1960s through today.

It is clear that members of marginalized communities are underrepresented in the current oral history collection at the Museum, and in the mainstream understanding of the 1960s counterculture. In 2021, one of our oral history narrators, Akinyele Sadiq, said, “... I knew that there were black hippies... it was part of a movement around the world, really... It wasn't just white kids in the United States who were thinking this way. Changes were happening worldwide, from Africa to Europe, to Asia, South America; all of that. So I felt it was all a part of the same movement.” Photographs clearly indicate a significant number of African Americans present at the Woodstock festival, for instance. As 2021 oral history participant, Norman Gaines shared: “The incorrect legend of Woodstock is a bunch of Euro-ethnicity hippies congregating in Central New York State... when that was far, far from the case.”

Over the last several years, community connector Steven Palmer has helped the Museum to scratch the surface of narrators from the LGBTQ+ community, including Donald Gallagher, who attended both the Stonewall uprisings and Woodstock in 1969. Though the sense of community that manifested at Stonewall was strong, he recalls that it did not extend everywhere. Of Stonewall, he said, “I got it over the telephone line by a friend who lived in that neighborhood. Well, I made a whole bunch of phone calls to other friends... Even walking across the street we'd see people and just said ‘Hey, listen come, there's like this riot going on over at the Stonewall... people just fighting with the cops... We're having enough.”

It is clear from the small but growing number of oral histories conducted with narrators of color and narrators from the LGBTQ+ community that their perspectives are critical to understanding the full picture of the time period that the Museum interprets. It is impossible to accurately record and represent the decade of the 1960s and seminal events like Woodstock without voices from all perspectives being recognized. As long as first-person narratives are available and waiting to be recorded, it is irresponsible to interpret history without them.

## PROGRAM PRIORITY

Both the African American and LGBTQ+ communities faced significant disadvantages in the 1960s and following decades. Though the anti-war movement took place largely on American college campuses, where only 5.3% of undergraduates were black, in Vietnam, African Americans accounted for 31% of the ground combat troops. The percentage of African Americans in the general population was 12%. Being placed into combat was not the end of the problems. In 2020, *Time Magazine* wrote that although many black veterans “formed enduring interracial friendships while fighting overseas, inequities and blatantly racist treatment stained their experiences both during and after the war” (Andrew Chow and Josiah Bates, June 12, 2020). The Civil Rights Act was only signed into law in 1964, after a decade of advocacy. Martin Luther King Jr. received the Nobel Peace Prize that year for his work against racial inequality through nonviolence, only to face violence during the Selma to Montgomery marches in 1965 and assassination in 1968.

For the LGBTQ+ community, the disadvantage was also acute. Elliot Tiber, a gay rights proponent who was largely known for his book *Taking Woodstock*, told *Publishers Weekly* in 2011 that “many younger members of today’s gay/lesbian community take their current freedoms for granted. I always knew I was gay, but there was really no choice at all for many of us in the 1950s and ’60s. We often had to remain closeted just to remain safe. Coming out in the summer of 1969 was the most dangerous yet liberating thing that ever happened to me.”

Over the last several years, many seminal events in the history of civil rights, gay rights, and more observed their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversaries. For many, these landmark anniversaries were a testament to the resilience and an open celebration of identity that many never dreamed they would live to see. Then the world faced COVID-19, disrupting and devastating the groups who were celebrating their communities as the virus tore through older demographics and communities of color. Additionally, the nationwide protests of May 2020 showed that not much had changed in 50 years. But it also showed that some of the most disadvantaged communities are also some of the most resilient.

No geographic region was more affected by COVID-19 than densely populated New York City, which exceeded 3 million virus cases and had 43,205 deaths, the highest cumulative loss of life of any city in the US. Federal, state, and local data have shown that disadvantaged communities experienced a disproportionate burden of COVID-19 cases and deaths. COVID-19, therefore, created a condition that didn’t just result in a loss of life. It resulted in the loss of stories; the loss of history. This loss is felt most acutely in the communities whose history is the least recorded.

No age demographic was more affected by COVID-19 than those over 65. According to the CDC, the older population had a 330% higher chance of dying from COVID-19 than the population under 30 years of age. However, the effects of COVID-19 were not just the loss of life. For older people, the isolation and loss of contact with relatives had an emotional cost that reverberated throughout all communities. At the Museum at Bethel Woods, there was a sharp increase in people signing up for the online Woodstock Alumni Registry, and an increase in the people willing to record oral histories. The virus forced many members of the “Woodstock Generation” to consider their legacies.

This project will directly take place in many neighborhoods that are annotated in the Justice 40 Initiative. These communities include Harlem, East Harlem, Washington Heights, Inwood, and the Bronx.

In the first year of the Oral History Initiative, we collected nearly 350 oral histories. In 2022 we nearly double that figure. With the significant support of an IMLS grant increasing our capacity in 2023, we will double again, creating a collection of almost 1,200 oral histories. These interviews illustrate the hope for change and the grassroots effort that was required to create change during one of the most tumultuous decades in our history. The oral histories are essential because they not only illustrate culture-changing events themselves but now, being taken over 50 years later, they offer a long view of the effects. They are clear about the sacrifice required to be an activist, but also those sacrifices affected or failed to affect the world 50 years later. These lessons are incredibly relevant, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic and the pressing issues of today and the future, such as health infrastructure and climate change. What is still needed as we work towards our goal of 1,200 interviews is the diverse perspective of people from underrepresented communities. Partnering with connectors to access 120 new oral histories from these groups in New York City would result in an increase to at least 10% of our narrators coming from diverse communities.

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The largest external obstacle we have faced in collecting the stories of the 1960s counterculture is the lack of trust in how and why we are gathering them (as their stories are often personal information and not readily shared). This has proven to be especially true of people within minority communities, activists, and people who took part in alternative and sometimes controversial lifestyles and activities. What became clear in the first year of the Oral History Initiative is that many people who associated themselves with the counterculture still do not trust institutions and are reluctant to engage with cold calls or emails from a museum. In short, they still feel disaffected by society. This is all the more reason to make every effort to include them at this critical time.

To cross the divide, the Museum needs connectors - trusted members and organizations within disadvantaged communities who have existing relationships within these communities. In this way, individuals who have been historically hesitant to offer their stories can be connected with in a positive, familiar, and safe way. Two people with whom the Museum has worked since its founding, Rachel Havens and Steven Palmer, maintain long-standing active interests in preserving the story and legacy of the 1960s. They each have significant connections to disadvantaged communities. Since the development of the Museum's Oral History Initiative in 2020, both have been in discussion about the work and agree about the importance of the initiative at this time. They have also each agreed to work as consultants for the Museum and to utilize their unique connections to communicate and connect with people. They intend to build trust between their own communities and ours.

### Community Connector Organizations:

Museum staff and consultants will be working with several institutions embedded in specific neighborhoods for the purpose of connecting with communities, and for use as interview locations during the program periods.

These institutions for Phase 1 of the project include Daniel's Music Foundation (East Harlem), the Dyckman Farmhouse Museum (Inwood), the Studio Museum in Harlem, and The Museum of the City of New York. These institutions all have a distinct history of highlighting the voices and works of individuals from marginalized backgrounds and are deeply embedded in their local communities.

The main institutional partner for Phase 2 of this project is The American LGBTQ+ Museum. This is a new museum, currently developing exhibits and programs. The Museum was founded with a mission to preserve, investigate, and celebrate the dynamic histories and cultures of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people, as well as those of emergent and adjacent identities. The Museum is being developed with an intentionality to collect and include these stories as part of American history. As such, they are the perfect partner to collect LGBTQ+ stories of the 1960s counterculture.

The American LGBTQ+ Museum will be working with other community partners to identify and connect with oral history participants. These partners will include the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Community Center, AKA The Center (East Village), Sage Advocacy and Services for LGBTQ+ Elders (Chelsea/Midtown), and The Brooklyn Community Pride Center (Crown Heights & Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn). These organizations all have long-term and well-established relationships with their communities.

#### Community Connector Consultants:

1960s Oral Histories - New York Community Connectors proposes to hire Rachel Havens and Steven Palmer as lead connectors who will work under the direction of Museum Curator Julia Fell to advance the Oral History Initiative to a new level within the Museum collection. Gretchen Sorin will serve as a third-party advisor.

Rachel Havens is the daughter of Richie Havens, the iconic black and indigenous musician who opened the Woodstock Music and Art Fair. She consulted with the Museum in 2018-2019 to collect oral histories from young people, particularly young people from marginalized backgrounds, to investigate how the hopes, fears, and dreams of today's youth compared to those of the youth of the 1960s. Havens maintains relationships with communities of color, activist groups, and key players within the Woodstock Nation.

Steven Palmer is a Columbia-trained oral historian who is also a COVID-19 medical specialist based in New York City. He is directly connected to disadvantaged communities in Manhattan and is currently working on health initiatives in Harlem and Washington Heights. A major focus of Palmer's past work has been highlighting the LGBTQ+ voices of the counterculture.

Dr. Gretchen Sorin is the Director of the Cooperstown Graduate Program and an experienced public historian with connections in the African American community. She will serve as an adviser. Through her decades-long career in the museum field, Sorin has a breadth of experience working with a multitude of communities and fostering a new generation of socially conscious museum professionals. She is the author of the 2020 book "Driving While Black: Race, Space, and Mobility in America," which examines aspects of race in American culture during the mid-20th century.

## METHODOLOGY

### GENERAL PHILOSOPHIES AND PRACTICES:

In 2020, consultants from the Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services for New York (DHPSNY), evaluated the Museum's archival collections. This was an assessment of our written policies and a walk-through of the collections facility. Subsequently, and while under COVID-19 lockdown, Museum staff wrote a Collecting Plan and new Collections Management Policy in response to these recommendations.

In the Museum's Collecting Plan, oral histories form one of the most important and robust parts of the collection. The acquisition, transcription, digitization, and public presentation of this collection will be the Museum's most important work and legacy. In the summer of 2020, Museum staff wrote an Oral History Collection Plan, Oral History Digitization Plan, and Oral History Procedures and Templates, all board-approved in 2021. Oral history methodology was written in partnership with the Cooperstown Graduate Program (CGP), as well as in reference to the Principles and Best Practices for Oral History as laid out by the Oral History Association.

In recognition of the guidelines and best practices recommended by the Oral History Association, and with deference to OHA's Guidelines for Social Justice Oral History Work (2022), the Museum recognizes that, particularly when working with and serving vulnerable communities, flexibility is key, and adaptation of any methodologies described below is possible when needed. The oral history experience is not solely for the benefit of the institution, but should rather be fulfilling for narrators, their communities, and the collecting organization. Similarly, according to OHA's core principles, the Museum recognizes that "Oral history practitioners must be sensitive to differences in power between the interviewer and the narrator as well as divergent interests and expectations inherent in any social relationship. These dynamics shape all aspects of the oral history process, including the selection of people to interview, research questions, personal interactions during the interview, interpretations, decisions on preservation and access, and the various ways that the oral history might be used."

A big methodological lesson learned during oral history pop-up programming in 2022 is that time must be allocated for the emotional impact of both giving and receiving an oral history. Interviews can become very personal and the interviewee can enter into deep reflection of connections with the past and present. We understand that no more than six interviews should be done in a working day to accommodate this. Time must be allocated for an interviewee to become comfortable in the space prior to the interview, and to decompress and reflect on the oral history afterward. Additionally, the interviewer needs time to process the emotional impact of hearing so many defining, personal histories that are often expressions of honesty, pain, and loss. We have learned that self-care for staff must be built into the schedule. These lessons will be detailed in a 2023 session presented at the Museum Association of New York annual conference in Syracuse, NY.

Supplementary to methods employed for most narrators, the Museum has researched best practices for interviewing narrators with memory and cognitive conditions such as dementia and Alzheimer's Disease. As the target demographic of narrators continues to age, occurrences of such conditions will only increase. In collaboration with consultants from the Columbia University Oral History Master of Arts program and art therapy education staff at Bethel Woods, the Museum is taking steps to maximize the oral history experience for all narrators.

In addition to full-time staff, The Museum and the Cooperstown Graduate Program have maintained an internship program, now in its 13th year. Oral history is a key component of the required work of CGP students making the program a natural fit for internships focused on this work. Oral history-focused internships have been offered since 2020. Julia Fell supervises three interns from CGP each year (spring, summer, and fall). Interns gain consistent real-world experience throughout the course of an academic semester. To date, graduate interns have contributed over 500 hours to the oral history initiative. At CGP, the oral history curriculum and the internship program are overseen by program director Dr. Gretchen Sorin.

#### DIGITAL PRESERVATION METHODS:

Digital preservation methods have been established with the Museum's Collecting Plan and Oral History Digitization Plan. Each interview is first recorded in high definition onto SD cards, which are clearly labeled and stored. For interviews recorded during pop-up programming, copies are made from the SD cards to a high-capacity external hard drive while on site, ensuring that at all times there are 2 copies of each media file. All interviews are later backed up on a secondary external hard drive stored at an off-site location, and then again on the Museum's servers. These servers are administered by Bethel Woods Center for the Arts IT staff and are backed up regularly.

#### POP-UP PROGRAMMING METHODS:

##### IDENTIFY NARRATORS:

The project will target narrators based in the New York City metro area who are part of the LGBTQ+ community and/or communities of color who were active in the 1960s counterculture and/or attended the 1969 Woodstock Music and Art Fair.

##### QUESTIONS:

Questions will be developed during meetings with the project team, including consultants Steven Palmer and Rachel Havens, and advisor Dr. Gretchen Sorin.

##### PREPARATORY RESEARCH:

Preparatory research will focus on collaborating with the designated community connectors to seek out narrators. These community connectors will act as advocates for the program and the Museum, allowing for an organic and safe introduction. The community connectors will provide background information on each narrator and if necessary, arrange preparatory pre-interview meetings between narrators and curators.

##### EQUIPMENT:

The Museum uses professional studio equipment for video recording. This includes a Panasonic AVCCAM AG-AF100A HD Digital Camcorder, as recommended by Doug Boyd, Ph.D., who serves as the director at the Louis B. Nunn Center for Oral History at the University of Kentucky Libraries and was president of the Oral History Association. Other equipment includes 2 TASCAM DR-10L Micro Recorders with Lavalier Microphones, a professional tripod, Impact studio lighting units with stands and softboxes, a 12' wide Impact backdrop kit, high-capacity SD cards, and high-capacity Toshiba external hard drives. All equipment is travelable and easily transported with purpose-made carrying cases.

##### INTERVIEW SETTING

Local interview settings will be provided by the designated community organizations. Each space will provide a quiet environment and enough space to set up a backdrop, a chair for the narrator, camera and lighting equipment, and chairs for interviewers. The space will also have an adjacent but separate area for administrative work related to the project. This area may also serve as a comfortable welcome area for arriving narrators.

##### PERMISSIONS:

The Museum at Bethel Woods employs a standard oral history release form which is signed by each narrator. In collaboration with the American LGBTQ+ Museum, the Museum will revise this form to



include both institutions with permissions for accession and use of the audio and visual material collected.

#### POST-INTERVIEW:

The post-interview stage includes follow-up communications with narrators and the processing of all generated files for storage. A transcript of each interview will be created using the Descript program, which uses AI to compose a first draft which is then edited and finalized by staff. Transcripts are saved as Word Documents and backed up alongside each copy of the interview media files. Interviews will be prepared with a cover sheet that includes key information about the interview (date, location, duration, etc.), a summary essay, and metadata/keywords. In the long term, these interviews will be incorporated into a public database planned in accordance with the Museum's collecting plan and recommendations by the Documentary Heritage Preservation Services of New York.

#### DELIVERABLES

This project will result in 120 long-form videotaped oral histories from members of communities of color and LGBTQ+ communities in New York City detailing personal stories of participation in the 1960s counterculture as well as their unique experiences surviving the COVID-19 pandemic. The oral histories will be accessioned into the collection at The Museum at Bethel Woods with a duplicate collection held by the American LGBTQ+ Museum. A formal release form will include both institutions and rights to use the material will be mutually shared.

Collecting oral histories is part of a larger project to create a database that will be accessible to the community and to researchers. All of the oral histories will be transcribed. Metadata will be attached and the text document for each interview will be stored in an information storage system (internal server) which is backed up nightly. Off-site backups are also maintained on separate 4TB external hard drives that are labeled and kept for each oral history project completed by the Museum. Part of the Museum's strategic collecting plan is to build a platform to host the information.

Following a 2020 collections assessment from the Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services of New York (DHPSNY), the need for an internal finding aid, as well as a public-facing digital platform, was prioritized. We plan to implement ArchivesSpace as the finding aid component. The public database will be built using OHMS and Omeka. The public will have access to digital audiovisual recordings and corresponding transcriptions. By using OHMS, each oral history interview will be searchable down to the word. This will have widespread benefits – making the stories of the '60s accessible to people across the world and across generations. Narrators will see their stories amongst those of their peers, contributing to the legacy of the counterculture. Their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren will be able to access the stories whenever they want or need to listen to them, in perpetuity. While this work is beyond the scope of this grant; it is discussed here to indicate the long-term goal of accessibility, use, and sustainability of the project.

Currently, oral histories are used to enhance and inspire on-site interpretation and programming. In 2021, a new online exhibit program was begun, focused on exceptional oral histories that have been recorded. As a participant in the Museum Association of New York Building Capacity program (funded by IMLS) Museum staff learned new skills in video production and web design. This has resulted in a slate of new video projects and a series of online exhibits featuring oral history from Woodstock photographers alongside the images that they have donated to the Museum's collection. These videos and online exhibits are free to access online and will be incorporated into future programming plans in

perpetuity. Oral histories collected through the 1960s Oral Histories - New York Community Connectors grant will be made immediately available for this type of community engagement programming.

With the Museum's stated Strategic Plan goal of becoming "locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally known as the premier 1960s cultural museum and exploration center," the potential near- and long-term use of the oral history collection is the primary strategic objective of the Museum for the next three years.

## WORK PLAN

1960s Oral Histories - New York Community Connectors will utilize teams to organize, connect, and collect oral histories in two primary collection time periods, focused on gathering stories from voices that are under-recorded within the history of the 1960s counterculture movement.

October-November 2023: Project Planning

January - February 2024: Project publicity and coordination with all external partners

### March, 2024. Phase 1: New York City – Harlem and surrounding neighborhoods:

The main focus of this phase will be collecting the stories of people still local to the New York area, and also those in alternate locations from the African American community, and other communities of color. On-site oral history interviews are conducted over 12 days at three institutions. A maximum of 6 interviews will be scheduled per day.

### June 2024. Phase 2: New York City - American LGBTQ+ Museum

The main focus of this phase will be collecting the stories of people still local to the New York area, and also those in alternate locations who identify with the LGBTQ+ community. On-site oral history interviews are conducted. Coordination with American LGBTQ+ Museum and the New York Historical Society over a two-week period. A maximum of 6 interviews will be scheduled per day.

August 2024: A two-week on-site oral history opportunity completed at Bethel Woods will coincide with the Woodstock 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Woodstock.

September 2023: Project completion, wrap-up, debriefing, and data processing.

## PROJECT PERSONNEL AND KEY ADVISORS

**Dr. Neal V Hitch**, Museum Director and Senior Curator of The Museum at Bethel Woods, is a historian and museum specialist with over 25 years of experience developing historic sites and museums. Dr. Hitch specializes in developing strategies for visitor engagement and innovative humanities programming. Dr. Hitch holds advanced degrees in Architecture and History from The Ohio State University. He has directed museums serving Native communities in Alaska and on the border of Mexico in California, and as director of the Hawaiian Mission Houses and Archives, managed one of the largest 19th-century archives in Hawai'i. As Project Director he will be responsible for signing and managing contracts and project oversight. It is expected that he will spend a total time of one month (20 working days) on the project.

**Julia Fell**, Oral History Initiative Lead & Internship Supervisor, is Curator at The Museum at Bethel Woods. She has advocated for the importance of oral histories in the authentic interpretation of the Woodstock historic site, notably implementing the medium in the award-winning 2019 special exhibition “We Are Golden.” The exhibit used a combination of existing and brand-new oral histories to illustrate diverse perspectives of both the Woodstock generation and today’s youth. She received formal training in oral history from the Cooperstown Graduate Program. As Project Manager, Julia will coordinate and schedule all activities and will be responsible for the transcription of interviews which will account for 40% of her time (5 months).

**Dr. Gretchen Sullivan Sorin** has served as the director of the Cooperstown Graduate Program for 26 years. After working as a museum educator, director, and consultant at more than 200 museums over 30 years, she returned to her alma mater to lend her experience and expertise to a new generation of museum professionals. All courses at CGP involve participatory learning and students in Dr. Sorin’s classes complete real projects for a variety of museums in New York State. As the director of the graduate program, Dr. Sorin delivers a focus on cultural literacy, social justice, and audience engagement. She has conducted extensive research on the dynamics of race in mid-century America.

**Rachel Havens**, Community Connector Consultant is the daughter of iconic 1960s folk musician Richie Havens. She has worked in community-based advocacy spaces for many years, describing herself as a multi-disciplinary “solutionary” artist using communications to ignite collaborative conversations and inspire action within communities. Herself a mixed-race person of color, she is active in addressing issues impacting these communities. In 2019, she worked with the Museum at Bethel Woods to collect new, diverse oral histories for the special exhibition “We Are Golden.” Through her father and her lifelong residency in Woodstock, NY, Havens is deeply connected with the countercultural community. It is anticipated that Rachel will spend a total of four weeks working on this project.

**Steven Palmer**, Community Connector Consultant, holds a Master’s Degree in Oral History from Columbia University. In 2019 Steven was an oral historian for the Stonewall 50th Anniversary Oral History Project (Tenement Museum, NYC). He worked with the Museum at Bethel Woods on oral history projects in 2019 (“We Are Golden” special exhibit) and 2021 (on-site oral history pop-up funded by MANY). Steven works as a physician assistant at Columbia University Medical Center where his focus has been on HIV research, prevention, and treatment. In March 2022, his team turned their efforts toward experimental treatments and vaccine research for COVID-19. Additionally, Steven works with disadvantaged communities coping with “long COVID” via community-based organizations in Washington Heights and Harlem. It is anticipated that Steven will spend a total of ten weeks consulting on this project.

**S.C. “Luci” Lucier** is the Sr. Associate of Public Programs & Partnerships at the American LGBTQ+ Museum. “Luci” has over a decade of experience in the production of professional performance as well as site management of high-caliber private events and exhibitions. They have been concurrently producing work as a queer storyteller in multiple capacities, leading projects as a theatrical auteur, director, and manager. Luci’s career has focused on the restorative queer narrative, a passion that transitioned into the History & Culture realm throughout graduate school and led to her work at ALM. Luci will coordinate with the Oral History team to collaborate with community partners, and provide space for interviews. After the interview period, Luci will oversee the acquisition of new interviews into the American LGBTQ+ Museum’s collection. It is anticipated that Luci will spend three months working on this project.