

August 26, 2022

To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to serve on the Aurora LGBTQ Advisory Board because I am passionate about educating the general public on LGBTQ issues, culture, and history. I believe doing so helps highlight the commonalities between queer and non-queer people and has the power to bring about a greater understanding between both groups.

I am an out-and-proud queer gay man with a great love for the Aurora community. I lived in the Oakhurst subdivision for the first four years of my life and later moved to the Deerbrook subdivision in 2019. My husband and I were married at our home in Aurora in May 2021. We started a LGBTQ-affirming wedding business in January that offers officiant and equipment rental services to any couple who wish to be married.

Most of my work and volunteer experience has been in the museum field, but I have an expansive knowledge of LGBTQ identities and issues from being a member of the community for over ten years. I also studied LGBTQ history in graduate school as part of my master's degree in history at Northern Illinois University and received training in DEI concepts and issues when I worked as a Peer IMPACT Facilitator at Elmhurst University. I have some knowledge of local government from working at two museums operated by park districts in Downers Grove and Wheaton, respectively. I have many other skills that I believe would make me an asset to the board: I have great project management and teamwork skills, am a skilled writer and researcher, and can effectively convey information to others.

This past April, I began working at Aurora University as the Registrar and Museum Manager of the Schingoethe Center and a Museum Studies Instructor. I have just begun volunteering as the staff advisor for the university's LGBTQ student group and hope to build bridges between the university's LGBTQ student population and the greater Aurora community.

Sincerely,

Zachary Bishop

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[REDACTED]

Zachary Bishop

EXPERIENCE

APRIL 2022 – PRESENT

Registrar, Museum Manager, and Instructor, AURORA UNIVERSITY

Manage the care, documentation, storage, use, and digitization of Schingoethe Center's artifact collection and the university's other special collections. Coordinate artifact loans from artists and other museums. Assist with marketing, exhibitions, and administration. Teach in the Museum Studies minor program and give presentations to classes.

JANUARY 2022 – PRESENT

Owner and Officiant, BISHOP WEDDINGS

Assist with the management of my husband and I's wedding officiant and equipment business, take promotional photography, and officiate wedding ceremonies.

JULY 2018 – APRIL 2022

Museum Curator, DUPAGE COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM (WHEATON PARK DISTRICT)

Led the development of over 20 temporary exhibitions. Managed the care, documentation, storage, use, and digitization of the museum's 40,000+ artifacts. Scheduled party, meeting, and wedding rentals. Assisted with visitor services, marketing, and administration.

MARCH 2017-AUGUST 2018

Museum Curator, DOWNERS GROVE MUSEUM (DOWNERS GROVE PARK DISTRICT)

Curated three temporary exhibitions and updated permanent exhibition signage. Oversaw the cataloging and storage of 2,000 new artifacts. Coordinated a historical photograph rehousing project. Educated school-age children and adults during school tours and programs.

AUGUST 2015-MAY 2017

Teaching Assistant, NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Assisted with teaching 40-student sections of American and world history courses.

VOLUNTEER WORK

AUGUST 2022 - PRESENT

Staff Advisor, AURORA UNIVERSITY PRIDE ALLIANCE

Provide guidance and support to the university's LGBTQ student group.

OCTOBER 2020 - PRESENT

Volunteer, DOWNERS GROVE MUSEUM (DOWNERS GROVE PARK DISTRICT)

Currently conducting research on the historic Israel Blodgett House's Underground Railroad connections and preparing the house's NPS Network to Freedom application. Also assist with programs and collections management work.

JANUARY 2014-MAY 2015

Peer IMPACT Facilitator, ELMHURST UNIVERSITY

Led programs and discussions on diversity, equity, and inclusion for student groups on campus.

EDUCATION

AUGUST 2017

Master of Arts in History, NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Studied American History and Public History, focusing on the sub-fields of LGBTQ History and Environmental History. Also took museum studies courses.

MAY 2015

Bachelor of Arts in History & English, ELMHURST UNIVERSITY

Graduated Summa Cum Laude. Obtained strong writing, research, and critical thinking skills.

PUBLICATIONS

2020

The Waupaca Chain o' Lakes, ARCADIA PUBLISHING

Book details the history of the Chain o' Lakes area of Waupaca, Wisconsin, exploring its history of tourism and recreation from the 1880s to today. Part of the *Images of America* series.

2019

“Now is the proper time for a foreigner to say a word’: The Rhetorical Agency of Hilda Satt Polacheck”, *JOURNAL OF AMERICAN ETHNIC HISTORY*

Co-written with Bridget K. O'Rourke. Academic article exploring the life and writing of Hilda Satt Polacheck, the author of the only known memoir of Jane Addams' Hull-House written by an immigrant woman.