

Brian J. Failing

Resume

Plainfield, IL 60585

Education

Eastern Illinois University

M.A. in History with Historical Administration, 3.9 GPA, May 2016.

North Central College

B.A. in Urban and Suburban Studies and History, *Cum Laude*, June 2014.

- **Study Abroad:** *Canterbury Christ Church University, Fall 2011.*

Awards and Honors

- *2015 Distinguished Graduate Student – Historical Administration*, Eastern Illinois University, Spring 2015.
- *Promising Leadership Award*, Association of Midwest Museums, July 14, 2014.
- *Outstanding Student in Human Thought and Behavior Division*, North Central College, May 2014.

Related Experience

Aurora Regional Fire Museum

March 2016 – Present

Executive Director

- Develop and implement exhibits, programs, and partnerships to grow our organization that welcomes over 60 tours annually and over 10,000 visitors.
- Cultivate beneficial community collaborations and partnerships to strengthen the community presence of the Museum in the Aurora and broader community.
- Work alongside Board of Directors to carry out our mission and manage staff, interns, and volunteers.

Museums at Lisle Station Park

June 2009 – August 2014

Museum Curator

- Managed, developed, implemented, and evaluated over 60 programs and 5 exhibits and increased overall attendance to the site by 400%.
- Increased visibility of museum by outreach to Chicago media outlets including: WGN Morning News, *Daily Herald*, *Suburban Life*, and *Chicago Tribune*, WBEZ, and WGN Radio, among others.

Community Involvement

Invest Aurora

December 2017 – Present

Retention Committee Member

Aurora Downtown

December 2016 – Present

Board Member, Chair – Business Attraction and Retention Committee

American Association for State and Local History

October 2015 – Present

Emerging History Professionals Affinity Community Committee

National Council on Public History

July 2015 - Present

New Professional and Graduate Student Committee

North Central College: Cultural Events Committee

September 2010 – June 2014

Student Committee Member

Naper Settlement Museum Board

August 2009 – June 2010

Student Board Member

Lisle Library Youth Advisory Board

August 2003 – June 2010

Board Member

Selected Publications

- “Examining Local History Through Postcards: A Model for Interactive, Inquiry-Based Pedagogy” in *Collections: A Journal for Museum and Archives Professionals* 12:04 (Fall 2016): PAGES. Focus issue on “Collections in a Digital Age” guest edited by Lauren Tilton and Brent Rogers, edited by Juilee Decker.
- “Using Postcard Collections to Engage with the Local Community” in *Positioning Your Museum as a Critical Community Asset: A Practical Guide*, edited by Robert P. Connolly and Elizabeth Bollwerk, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2016.
- “Google Resources for the Small Museum.” *Technical Leaflet*. Illinois Heritage Association (Nov-Dec. 2016).
- “Changing Functions: The Use of Old Main During the 1870s.” *Undergraduate Archives Research Publication*, North Central College (May 2013).

Selected Conference Presentations

- 10 Ways to Transform Your Museum for the Future, Oral Presentation, Fire Museum Seminar, Cincinnati, OH, September 6-8, 2018.
- *Regional Placemaking: Staying Relevant in Your Community* (in conjunction with Michelle Podkowa and Concetta Gibson), Oral Presentation, Illinois Association of Museums, Oak Park, IL, September 28-30, 2016.
- *Enriching the Museum: Graduate Students and Technology*, Oral Presentation, American Association for State and Local History, Detroit, MI, September 14-17, 2016.
- *Connecting the Dots of Your Community*, Oral Presentation, Illinois Association of Museums Conference, Springfield, IL, September 24-25, 2015.
- *The Heart of the Campus: Old Main During the 1870s*, Poster Presentation, Rall Symposium for Undergraduate Research, North Central College, Naperville, IL, May 13, 2014.
- *A Tale of Two Places: A Chicago Neighborhood* (in conjunction with Maci Mitchell and Patrick Foley), Paper Presentation, Midwest Sociological Society Conference, Omaha, NE, April 3-6, 2014.
- *Municipal Government: The Story of the Village of Lisle’s Incorporation*, Paper Presentation, Conference on Illinois History, Springfield, IL, September 26-27, 2013.
- *Utilizing the Past to Create a Greener Community* (with Alison Costanzo), Poster Presentation, Association of Midwest Museums Conference, Madison, WI, July 14-17, 2013.
- *Reconnecting with History through Historic Environment Education*, Poster Presentation, Rall Symposium for Undergraduate Research, North Central College, Naperville, IL, May 14, 2013.
- *Reconnecting with History: The Natural Environment and HEE’s Place within Suburban Illinois Museums*, Paper Presentation, Bridging Ages Conference, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM, April 15-19, 2013.