




City of Seattle Boards & Commissions Notice of Appointment

Appointee Name: VJ Kopacki		
Board/Commission Name: Landmarks Preservation Board		Position Title: Historian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Appointment OR <input type="checkbox"/> Reappointment		City Council Confirmation required? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Appointing Authority: <input type="checkbox"/> City Council <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mayor <input type="checkbox"/> Other: Fill in appointing authority		Term of Position: * 8/15/2025 to 8/14/2028 <input type="checkbox"/> Serving remaining term of a vacant position
Residential Neighborhood: Queen Anne	Zip Code: 98119	Contact Phone No.: [REDACTED]
Background: VJ Kopacki has over a decade of professional experience in museum leadership, public history, and historic preservation. She is passionate about honoring and interpreting the layered histories of our built environment through community-centered research and preservation, to help tell the full story of our shared past. VJ holds a Masters Degree in Museum Studies, and Bachelor Degrees in Anthropology, and Gender Studies. She is currently the Executive Director of the Kent Historical Museum in Kent, Washington and seeks to bring her passion for preserving heritage and a practical knowledge of historic building stewardship to the Landmarks Preservation Board.		
Authorizing Signature (original signature):  Date Signed (appointed): August 5 th , 2025		Appointing Signatory: Bruce A. Harrell Mayor of Seattle

*Term begin and end date is fixed and tied to the position and not the appointment date.

VJ KOPACKI

EDUCATION

M.A. IN MUSEUM STUDIES
Johns Hopkins University

B.A. IN ANTHROPOLOGY
Dickinson College

B.A. IN GENDER STUDIES
Dickinson College

SKILLS

Professional Skills

Strategic Planning
Project Management
Fundraising
Grant Writing
Staff & Volunteer
Management
Interpretive Planning
Program Development
Program Evaluation

Technical Skills

MS Office
CatalogIt
Blackbaud
DonorSnap
QuickBooks
PastPerfect
Archivists' Toolkit
DonorPerfect
Apricot

Language

English (Native)
German (Conversational)

WORK EXPERIENCE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Kent Historical Museum | Kent, WA | 2025 - *present*

- Supervise, hire, and train part time and full-time staff and project contractors.
- Oversee operating budget of \$200,000 in collaboration with the Board of Directors.
- Writing a new interpretation plan to transform the historic house museum into a community-focused museum.
- Oversee collections move to a new collections facility.
- Secure more than \$53,000 in grant funding for accessibility projects.
- Currently in consideration for 4Culture, ArtsWA, The Washington State Historical Society, and ArtsFund grants to increase museum capacity
- Oversee collections committee and act as chief curator of the museum collection.
- Foster relationships with community organizations, artists, and businesses.
- Currently planning a re-dedication of a Japanese Incarceration memorial.
- Expand exhibit spaces to include exhibits on Indigenous history, Japanese history, the Filipino community, and Ukrainian immigrants and refugees.

DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS & OUTREACH

Historic Sugartown | Malvern, PA | 2023 - 2024

- Supervise, hire, and train 10 paid part-time staff, and 80 volunteers.
- Oversight of Sugartown's operational budget of \$450,000.
- Lead the development and execution of a new interpretation plan including programs, exhibitions, events, arts workshops, and reimagined tours.
- Cultivating major donors and sponsorships, oversee and direct fundraising initiatives and events.
- Handle annual appeal paperwork, manage vendor and partner contracts and implement budget, secure grant funding for archival and programmatic support.
- Organize the annual series of Biergarten development fundraisers and Craft Market.

MUSEUM DIRECTOR & CURATOR

Pearl S. Buck International | Perkasi, PA | 2021-2022

- Prepared a successful application for accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM).
- Managed operations of the Pearl S. Buck House, a budget of \$720,000 or 40% of PSBI's operating budget.
- Managed historic house tours and programs, bringing in \$160,000 in revenue.
- Organized virtual Speakers Series, focusing on topics including Pearl S. Buck's civil rights activism.
- Acted as chief director and curator of the museum collection, including exhibition planning and execution, care of historical objects and historic house, loan management, accessions, research, conservation, grant writing, and copyright requests.

VJ KOPACKI

ACHIEVEMENT

ACCREDITATION

American Alliance of Museums
(AAM)
2021

UNDERGROUND RAILROAD
NETWORK TO FREEDOM
DESIGNATION
National Parks Service
2021

FEATURED IN

THE SLAVE DWELLING
PROJECT CONFERENCE
Museum of the American
Revolution
October 2024

PEARL S BUCK & ILHAN NEW
DOCUMENTARY
Korean broadcast System (KBS)
2023

"THE GOOD EARTH"
Princeton Magazine
April 2022

"UNDERGROUND RAILROAD"
Philadelphia Inquirer
May 2021

"UNDERGROUND RAILROAD"
WHYY.com
May 2021

OUT IN CENTRAL
PENNSYLVANIA: THE HISTORY
OF AN LGBTQ COMMUNITY.
Keystone Books
2020

- Acted as chief archivist and librarian, supervising management of more than 18,000 books, works on paper, photographs, and other archival materials.
- Supervision of staff, including 5 full and part-time staff and 300 volunteers.
- Partnered with 20 nonprofits for the annual Festival of Trees celebration and fundraiser.

MUSEUM EDUCATION MANAGER

Peter Wentz Farmstead | Lansdale, PA | 2018-2021

- Developed hands-on exhibits, events, and programs related to slavery. Achieved recognition by the National Parks Service as a "Network to Freedom" historic site.
- Organized a conference on slavery, partnering with leading interpreters and historians of enslavement nation-wide.
- Oversaw a year-long effort to center women's stories in historical interpretation, including a new on-site exhibit, virtual lessons, and historic house tours.
- Managed a team of 140 on-site volunteers and 40 nation-wide volunteers.
- Partnered with local organizations to expand educational scope to include environmental education, homeschool programs, and educational opportunities for disabled children and adults.

HISTORIC SITE ADMINISTRATOR

William Brinton 1704 House | West Chester, PA | 2017-2018

- Spearheaded a new interpretation plan which reconceptualized tours and programs in the historic house.
- Curated a new roster of public programs to center experiential learning
- Increased volunteer pool by 66% in six months, hired and trained new volunteers and interns.

CURATOR

Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections | Carlisle, PA | 2015-2017

- Curated exhibits for public display in partnership with the LGBTQ History Project of Central Pennsylvania.
- Managed accessioning of donations and objects.
- Developed a virtual map of 720+ historic sites important to LGBTQ history.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS INTERN

Old Sturbridge Village | Sturbridge, MA | 2016

- Created an interpretive program plan for educational programming.
- Demonstrated hands-on historical crafts such as gardening, open hearth cooking, sewing, gardening and farming.
- Supervised training of Junior Intern staff.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

Gettysburg National Military Park | Gettysburg, PA | 2014

- Performed immersive programs for the public, conducted historical skills workshops, and developed public programs and events.
- Created the innovative program Voices of the Past, drawing from primary archival sources to bring to life the story of the Battle of Gettysburg.

Landmarks Preservation Board

12 Members: Pursuant to *Ordinance No. 106348*, all members subject to City Council confirmation, 3-year term for 11 members, and 1-year term for Get Engaged Member:

- 12 Mayor-appointed

Roster:

*D	**G	RD	Position No.	Position Title	Name	Term Begin Date	Term End Date	Term #	Appointed By
2	F	3	1.	At-Large	Erica J. Thomas	08-15-25	08-14-28	1st	Mayor
2	M	3	2.	At-Large	Lawrence Norman	08-15-24	08-14-27	2nd	Mayor
1	F	2	3.	Structural Engineer	Roi Chang	08-15-22	08-14-25	2nd	Mayor
1	M	N/A	4.	Get Engaged	Cameron Wong	09-01-25	08-31-26	1st	Mayor
6	F	4	5.	Architect	Taber Caton	08-15-24	08-14-27	2nd	Mayor
6	M	2	6.	Urban Planning	Ian Macleod	08-15-24	08-14-27	2nd	Mayor
6	F	6	7.	Real Estate	Katie Randall	08-15-25	08-14-28	2nd	Mayor
6	F	3	8.	At-Large	Harriet Wasserman	08-15-24	08-14-27	2nd	Mayor
2	F	N/A	9.	Historian	Lora-Ellen McKinney	08-15-24	08-14-27	2nd	Mayor
6	F	2	10.	Architect	Becca Pheasant-Reis	08-15-25	08-14-28	2nd	Mayor
			11.	Finance	Vacant	08-15-25	08-14-28		Mayor
6	F	7	12.	Historian	VJ Kopacki	08-15-25	08-14-28	1st	Mayor

SELF-IDENTIFIED DIVERSITY CHART

SELF-IDENTIFIED DIVERSITY CHART					(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
	Male	Female	Transgender	NB/ O/ U	Asian	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latino	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Other	Caucasian/ Non- Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Middle Eastern	Multiracial
Mayor	3	8			2	3				6			
Council													
Other													
Total													

Key:

*D List the corresponding *Diversity Chart* number (1 through 9)

**G List gender, M= Male, F= Female, T= Transgender, NB= Non-Binary O= Other U= Unknown

RD Residential Council District number 1 through 7 or N/A

Diversity information is self-identified and is voluntary.