

The History Project: Documenting LGBTQ Boston

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## The History Project Announces Inaugural Executive Director

*With Support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Scholarly Communications Program,  
Joan Ilacqua takes helm in January 2020*

BOSTON, MA (JANUARY 15, 2020) The History Project (THP), Boston's LGBTQ community archives, is thrilled to announce the appointment of the first executive director and first-ever full-time staff position in its 40-year history, Joan Ilacqua. Ms. Ilacqua, former Co-Chair of The History Project's board of directors, is a public historian and archivist with experience in oral history, outreach, and acquiring materials from diverse communities. As executive director, Ms. Ilacqua will focus on areas that include strategic planning, fundraising, operations, and collaboration with other nonprofit leaders and community organizations.

The creation of THP's first-ever full-time staff position was made possible through a grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. THP is part of the inaugural class of the Mellon Archives program, which aims to diversify the nation's stores of primary-source evidence by supporting and strengthening community-based archiving practice. This material is available to researchers in humanities fields as well as activists, artists, community historians, genealogists, teachers, and students.

"This grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation represents an important and transformative moment for The History Project," notes board chair Andrew Elder. "The grant creates extensive opportunities to expand our work, reach new audiences, and build a more solid future. The board of directors is thrilled to have Joan Ilacqua as our inaugural executive director, who will guide us and champion our work in this period of change. We're also grateful to the Mellon Foundation for understanding, valuing, and supporting our mission."

"I'm honored to be The History Project's inaugural executive director," Ilacqua said. "For 40 years, volunteers have documented, preserved, and shared our community's history. Their efforts and energies will continue to guide us as an organization, I look forward to being a steward of their vision."

Most recently, Ilacqua served as Co-Chair of The History Project's board of directors and as Harvard Medical School's Archivist for Diversity and Inclusion. She is a member of the New England Archivists' Inclusion and Diversity Committee, and has a background in advocacy and

oral history. She is a graduate of UMass Boston's Public History master's program, and earned her Bachelor of Arts at the University of Puget Sound.

She began her new position in January 2020, and looks forward to hearing from you at [info@historyproject.org](mailto:info@historyproject.org).

### **About The History Project**

Established in 1980, The History Project preserves the history of New England's LGBTQ communities and shares it with researchers and the public. The group maintains one of the largest independent LGBTQ archives in the nation—over one million records and growing—encompassing almost 200 collections donated by organizations and individuals. The History Project shares this history through public talks focused on collections, programming created in partnership with other organizations, and the annual HistoryMaker Awards, which honors established and emerging leaders. To learn more, please visit [www.historyproject.org](http://www.historyproject.org).

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