

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**CT Humanities Announces New Members on Board of Directors,
Helen Higgins to Lead**

MIDDLETOWN, CONN (September 9, 2022) – Connecticut Humanities (CTH) today announced several transitions within its Board of Directors, including new leadership, three new members, and three departures from the group.

At their June meeting, the CTH Board of Directors elected **Helen Higgins (Guilford)** as chair. She assumes the role left by the departure of Lewis Wallace, Jr. who had served in that capacity since 2020, having joined the board in 2016.

“Lew has been an active and committed board member and as a result, CTH has really benefited. He took on everything asked of him and did so willingly and in a professional and competent manner,” says board member **Elaine McDonald (Middletown)** who served as Vice-Chair until the end of the fiscal year 2021 and remains on the board.

McDonald continues, “being board chair is a challenging assignment in the best of times – and the last two years with COVID have not been the best of times. Lew led us through in a strong manner and with steady leadership and for that, I am truly grateful.”

Higgins previously served as CTH’s Interim Director. She was executive director of the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation (PreservationCT) for 18 years, and before that, president of the Connecticut League of History Organizations. For 10 years, Higgins served as a commissioner and member of the Advisory Committee of the Commission on Culture and Tourism and recently was a member of the Speaker of the House’s Blue Ribbon Task Force on Tourism. She has over 40 years of direct involvement with heritage/preservation organizations around the state.

According to **Higgins**, “Lew set the standard for board chairman very, very high. His careful cultivation of board committees and generous gratitude have created strong and well-functioning governance,” she continues, adding “he was a source of strength and set us on a very clear path forward. And this is a path that I am proud to follow.”

Joining the board of directors in 2022 are **Ruth G. Torres (West Haven)**, **David Claiborn (Shelton)**, and **Hanna Przada, AIA (Weston)**. They will serve alongside Chair Higgins, Vice-Chair Frank Mitchell, Ph.D., and the rest of the [CTH board members](#).

“We are delighted to have Ruth, David, and Hanna join the Board of Directors. They bring knowledge, expertise, and a passion for the humanities that will be critical to our success as we seek to strengthen Connecticut’s cultural sector,” says **Jason Mancini, Ph.D.**, executive director at CTH. “I look forward to Helen’s board leadership and partnership. Her decades of non-profit experience and the relationships she has cultivated across the state will help to ensure CT Humanities’ place as a cultural leader and funder in Connecticut,” adds **Mancini**.

New Board Member Bios:

David Claiborn

David Claiborn is currently a member of the Commonfund Asset Management Relationship team with a focus on requests for proposals or RFPs. He joined the firm in 2012 and shares responsibility for responding to RFPs, Due Diligence Questionnaires (DDQs), and consultant requests. David is also responsible for creating new RFP responses and editing existing content. Prior to joining Commonfund, he was a Vice President and Senior Marketing and Branding Specialist at Barclays, and was responsible for writing and distributing weekly highlights, crafting and refining content, and internal education. David holds an M.B.A. in Marketing and a B.S. in Business Administration from Iona College.

Hanna Przada, AIA

Hanna Przada, the founder and principal of LyonsPlain Architecture and Design (LPA), is a registered architect and interior designer. An AIA member, she holds NCARB certification, LEED AP accreditation, and holds an architectural license in Connecticut, New York, and Colorado. Hanna has over 18 years in the architecture, design, and real estate development industry. Leveraging her background and experience in fine arts, Hanna’s unique design sensibility, informed by years of collaboration with artists and curators, has been applied to projects for hospitality groups, municipal and philanthropic organizations, private developers, and individual clients. Hanna has a master’s degree in Architecture and Interior Design from Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Gdańsku in Gdańsk, Poland.

Ruth G. Torres

Ruth Garby Torres is an enrolled citizen of the Schaghticoke Tribal Nation, whose reservation is near Kent, Connecticut. At age 16 she was elected to the tribal council and served as its treasurer. Torres holds a bachelor’s degree from Charter Oak State College and a Master of Public Administration from Harvard University. She was a teaching fellow for three years at

Harvard University where she helped teach *Nation Building II: American Indians in the 21st Century*. Among her many appointments, Torres served as chair of Connecticut's Native American Heritage Advisory Council, trustee for the Institute for American Indian Studies, and an advisory board member for Yale University's Native American Cultural Center. She is a regular participant in the National Congress of American Indians Federal Acknowledgement Task Force and Elections Committee. Torres was a Connecticut state trooper for 21 years and is presently employed by the City of West Haven where she works in the mayor's office.

CTH is grateful for the service of members departing the CTH Board:

Leaving the board this year along with Wallace are **Rebekah Beaulieu**, who will be heading up Cincinnati's Taft Museum of Art as president and CEO, and **Myron Stachiw**, a Ukrainian-American consultant in heritage and conservation working tirelessly with various organizations in a joint international effort to preserve Ukraine's heritage.

Mancini says, "I am thankful for the service Becky and Myron gave to CTH's board. Both are committed advocates for the public humanities and were generous in sharing their energy and vast expertise in advancing our mission."

Connecticut Humanities' Board of Directors meets quarterly and is responsible for reviewing grant applications, setting policies, reviewing budgets, assisting in the fundraising process, participating in committee work, and serving as an important link between Connecticut Humanities and the public.

CTH is Connecticut's only statewide non-profit organization focused broadly on supporting access to and providing funding for public humanities through grant funding and capacity building. CTH grants have supported a variety of projects and organizations for more than four decades.

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Connecticut Humanities (CTH) is an independent, nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. CTH connects people to the humanities through grants, partnerships, and collaborative programs. CTH projects, administration, and program development are supported by state and federal matching funds, community foundations, and gifts from private sources. Learn more by visiting cthumanities.org.