# ACCESSIBILITY LAB

# Small Museum Association Annual Conference

# February 16-18, 2020, College Park, MD

# PRESENTER

Nicole Belolan, PhD, is the Public Historian in Residence and Acting Director at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Center for the Humanities (MARCH) at Rutgers University-Camden. There, she directs a continuing education program in historic preservation that serves avocational historians and professional public historians alike. As part of her position at Rutgers, she is also the Co-Editor of *The Public Historian* and the Digital Media Editor for the National Council on Public History, a role in which she facilitates sharing ideas about the practice of public history. Nicole lectures and writes regularly on the history of disability and making small museums and historic sites more accessible both physically and programmatically. Nicole serves as the Secretary of the Disability History Association.

# ABSTRACT

Is your small museum serving people with disabilities? Maybe you want to, but you don’t know where to start! This hands-on workshop will introduce simple steps you can take today to make your programming and space more accessible to people with disabilities and their friends and families. This workshop will give participants quick, easy, and virtually free tips and tricks to make everything from social media posts to tours more accessible. Since accessibility is also about providing disability-related content when appropriate, this workshop will also provide participants with a primer on how to interpret the history of disability at their site. In addition, participants will get a quick overview of the history of museums serving people with disabilities within the broader context of the history of disability rights in the US so they know how they fit into the longer history of advocating for and serving people with disabilities.

# TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

* What does accessibility mean to you? 10 min
* What is your site doing now for people with disabilities? 10 min
* Where are we coming from? Disability in History 20 min
* What are easy, quick things we can do to make our sites more accessible? 20 min
* Activity 20 min
* Regroup. What are your plans now to make your site more accessible and inclusive next week? Next month? Next year? 10 min

Selected Readings and Resources compiled

by nicole belolan

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Tom Mayes, “The 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act,” National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Leadership Forum*,*December 2, 2015, <https://forum.savingplaces.org/blogs/forum-online/2015/12/02/the-25th-anniversary-of-the-americans-with-disabilities-act>.

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