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# Connecting with Universities and Students

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# Megan Pellegrino

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- Director of Museum Studies and Director of the Hoover Historical Center at Walsh University
  - MAT in Integrated Social Studies Education, BA in History, both from Miami University
- Graduate research on the representation of women in 20<sup>th</sup> century American history textbooks
- Coordinated and supervised 70+ museum internships and capstone projects for students since 2008





## Why the desire to connect with students?

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- Museums are understaffed and overcommitted
- Museums are facing budget challenges
- \*Students can provide free or inexpensive, skilled labor

# Student Involvement in Museums

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1. Student reaches out to museum for course assignment
2. Museum staff member is invited to visit a class
3. Class takes a visit to a museum
4. Students serve as special event volunteers at a museum
5. Students serve as long-term volunteers at a museum
6. An instructor leads a course project that involves a museum
7. Students intern at a museum
8. Students are employed at a museum



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Before you request student assistance, ask yourself one question...

*Do I have the time available to work with a student?*

# If the answer is, yes, how do you connect with students?

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- Develop a relationship with specific faculty members
  - Identify the department of interest...could be Museum Studies, History, Art History, Business, etc.
  - Email the dean or department chair and introduce yourself or reach out to a specific faculty member.
  - Offer to speak to classes or provide tours for classes or student organizations.
- Once you develop a relationship with specific people at the universities, you can reach out to them when you need help
  - And vice versa, they will reach out to you when they have a student looking for an opportunity!



# Other ways to connect

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- Reach out to the career center to post opportunities for volunteers/internships/jobs
  - Be sure to have a detailed job description ready for them to disseminate to faculty and/or students
  - Create a Handshake account and post opportunities there
- Post available volunteer/internship/employment opportunities on your website so that students can find them...be specific and detailed
  - List tasks, responsibilities, and potential projects
  - Describe what training will be offered to interns and what skills they will gain
  - Provide a timeframe and number of weekly hours required/available

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## Permanent Collection



*Interns Rebecca Finley and Sarah Dickes assisted staff member Emily Vigil in photographing, inventorying, and rehousing hundreds of hats in 2018.*

If you are interested, please send a resume and a letter of intent to Archivist Mandy Altimus Stahl ([mastahl@massillonmuseum.org](mailto:mastahl@massillonmuseum.org)) or call with questions: 330-833-4061 x113 or to Curator of Football Heritage Bailey Yoder ([byoder@massillonmuseum.org](mailto:byoder@massillonmuseum.org)) or call with questions: 330-833-4061 x116.

### **Collection Inventory: History/Fine Art/Football Heritage**

Help build the inventory of our 100,000+ piece collection with categories that include costumes and textiles, musical instruments, toys, glass, photography, industrial equipment, nursing, sports, archaeology, anthropology, ceramics, fine art, and sculpture. In 2018-2019, we underwent large collections processing and rehousing. Help us to record information, research, and rehouse various artifacts related to accessories, glass, and football heritage.

### **Cataloging**

Learn how an object becomes part of a museum's collection, from processing donor paperwork to labeling artifacts for storage.

# Best Practices for Working with Interns

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1. Interview
2. Have an agreed upon work plan
3. Hold an orientation
4. Have a long-term project
5. Provide feedback regularly through informal discussions and formal evaluations

# A few thoughts...

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- If possible, provide a stipend or scholarship
- Length of internship and hours per week matter
- Working on-site makes a difference

# Sample Orientation Outline

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- Discuss mission, exhibitions, and programming
- Tour the facilities
- Review organizational chart; meet the staff
- Review museum procedures and policies
  - Where to park, where to put your belongings, how lunch works, how to use the phone system, etc.
  - Dress code, code of ethics, WFH policies, etc.
- Discuss specific work plan and goals

# Best Practices for Working with University Faculty and Staff

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- Familiarize yourself with requirements from the university
- Keep university faculty and staff updated of any issues
  - Don't wait until it's too late to communicate

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To be successful, these relationships must be mutually beneficial. Building these types of relationships takes effort, but when done well, the benefits are priceless.

# Contact me!

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