Curatorial & Research Position in Indigenous History
Northwestern University Postdoctoral Fellowship in Public Service
The Mitchell Museum of the American Indian

The Mitchell Museum’s Mission
To promote and share a deeper understanding of Indigenous people’s histories, cultures, traditions, and contributions, both past and present.

As museums aim to support racial equity and social justice causes, they undo their colonial practices and recognize their accountability to underrepresented and underserved communities. The Mitchell Museum is no exception. We seek to present programming and exhibitions that serve as catalysts for community change and space for critical discourse about historical inaccuracies and injustice.

The Project
1. Overview
The project focuses on a permanent exhibit and community initiative to reexamine and explore the Indigenous histories and contemporary contributions of Native communities of the Great Lakes region, Evanston, and Chicagoland area.

2. Description
We are beginning with an examination of the complex legacy of Evanston’s namesake, John Evans. This project seeks to engage with the Native and non-Native communities to reflect and reconcile with Evans’ past. We aim to present a complete history that is transparent and inclusive of Native American voices and non-dominant perspectives. The exhibit and associated programs offer visitors and Evanston residents greater depth and understanding to confront the complexities of John Evan’s legacy and other prominent historical figures and their relationship to the Native American people. The theme will continue as the exhibit explores a more in-depth and inclusive history of the Evanston area’s Native American tribes and cultures, including treaties, displacement, relocation, and a current focus.

The proposed project corresponds with the Mitchell Museum’s new vision and direction to address structural racism in cultural institutions inspired by Ho-Chunk Scholar Dr. Amy Lonetree’s guiding principles: truth-telling and accountability, rethinking ownership, organizational culture shift, and Indigenous representation.
Key Responsibilities and Tasks

1. Co-curate/oversee the development of an exhibit that explores local Indigenous history from an Indigenous perspective using innovative approaches to creating an engaging exhibition.
2. Work, engage and collaborate with tribal leaders from Great Lakes tribes, traditional knowledge keepers, and Chicagoland’s Native American community for oral histories, consultation, and resources when applicable.
3. Exhibit development (Plan and conduct research, exhibit text writing, study and implement exhibit technology and audience engagement strategies, exhibit installation, etc.)

Guideline for (but not required) Qualifications

1. Strong written and communication skills
2. Strong interpersonal and collaborative skills
3. Basic understanding of regional Indigenous history and tribes
4. Commitment to racial equity
5. Knowledge of research methodologies relevant to indigenous studies
6. Experience engaging in conversation and dialogue with people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives
7. Ability to work independently and collaboratively in a team-oriented environment
8. Demonstrated expertise in curation such as research, exhibits, and collections, or equivalent experience
9. Experience with project management
10. Familiarity with basic oral history audio and video recording equipment

Contact
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