



Western Connecticut
Leadership

A Program of



Orientation and History Session September 11, 2017

Goals and Objectives

Goal: An opening session designed to set the foundation for Western Connecticut Leadership's eight-week program

Objectives:

- ❖ To provide an introduction to the Connecticut Community Foundation and the mission of the Western Connecticut Leadership program, and to offer a congenial way for this year's class members to meet
- ❖ To explore some of the significant themes that have shaped Western Connecticut's history and that continue to connect the region's towns and cities today
- ❖ To introduce participants to efforts of local non-profits to preserve the stories of Connecticut's past and make them meaningful in the present—using the Litchfield Historical Society as a model teaching tool for the day

Important Session Information

Session Leaders

Rachel Carley, *WCL '16*
Catherine Fields, Executive Director, *Litchfield Historical Society*

Suggested Attire

Dressing for comfort is appropriate. **Comfortable shoes are recommended; the day involves a short walk to the Tapping Reeve House.** If rain is in the forecast, please bring an umbrella or rain jacket.

Venues

Litchfield Historical Society
7 South Street, Litchfield, CT 06759 (860.567.4501)

Tapping Reeve House and Law School
82 South Street, Litchfield

Parking

Free parking is available across the street at:

Congregational Church of Litchfield
21 Torrington Road (Rt. 202), Litchfield, CT 06759

Since there is a pre-school operating on this property and the children use portions of the parking lot, please park in the middle of the lot. [Click here for a map.](#)



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Agenda

- 8:15-8:45 Arrival and Light Breakfast
- 8:45-8:50 **Welcome**
Lori Ann Brass, *Chair*, 2017 WCL Planning Team and WCL '15
Tina Bernacki, *Vice Chair*, 2017 WCL Planning Team and WCL '16
- 8:50-10:00 **Program Orientation and Opening Exercise**
Paula Van Ness, CEO, *Connecticut Community Foundation*
- 10:00-10:05 **Introduction to History Session**
Rachel Carley, WCL '16, *Independent Historian and Historic Preservation Consultant*
- 10:05-10:40 **A Passion for History**
Walt Woodward, *Connecticut State Historian*
- 10:40-10:50 Break
- 10:50-11:35 **Bringing History Forward: Town Roads, Town Greens, Town Politics**
Rachel Carley, WCL '16, *Independent Historian and Historic Preservation Consultant*
- 11:35-12:15 **Past to Present: A Short History of Waterbury and the Naugatuck Valley**
Raechel Guest, Director, *Silas Bronson Library*
- 12:15-1:00 Lunch
- 1:00-3:45 **Behind the Scenes at the Museum**
Introduced by: Catherine Fields, Executive Director, *Litchfield Historical Society*
- Participants will be divided into two groups for tours of the Litchfield Historical Society and visits to the Tapping Reeve Law School Museum and Garden
- 3:45-4:00 **Session Day Wrap Up**
Brief review of the day and preview of Environment Day



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Speaker Biographies

Paula Van Ness

President and Chief Executive Officer, *Connecticut Community Foundation*

Paula Van Ness became President and CEO of Connecticut Community Foundation in 2012, bringing four decades of nonprofit leadership experience to the organization. Previously, Paula served as Chief Operating Officer of the Peter G. Peterson Foundation in New York City. She was the national CEO for Starlight Children's Foundation, Make-A-Wish America and National Alliance to End Homelessness. Paula was the founding president of the National AIDS Fund (now AIDS United).

Paula has served on the governing boards and as an officer for both Independent Sector and KaBOOM! Additionally, she chaired the national board of Gift of Adoption Fund. She founded and currently serves as President of 12by12by12(SM). Paula completed her BS in Child Development at the University of Arizona and earned an MS in Organization Development from the University of San Francisco. She is a certified Grant Professional and a graduate of the philanthropic leadership development program at the Center for Creative Leadership.

Contact Info: pvanness@conncf.org, <http://www.conncf.org>

Walt Woodward, Ph.D.

Connecticut State Historian

Mr. Woodward is the fifth person to hold the position of State Historian, which was created in the 1930s in preparation for Connecticut's 300th anniversary. The State Historian is appointed by the trustees of the University of Connecticut and is a faculty member in the UConn Department of History. The State Historian is also assigned by the legislature to serve on a number of boards and commissions that promote, preserve, and/or research state history. In addition, the Office of the State Historian provides information on historical matters to the media, public, and legislature, and maintains active programs of historical research and public outreach, conducting lectures, programs, and teacher education seminars throughout the state.

Prof. Woodward received his Ph.D. with Distinction from the University of Connecticut in 2001, and has served as State Historian since 2004. He obtained his Master's Degree in History from Cleveland State University, and his B.A. in English from the University of Florida. Prior to joining UConn, he was a faculty member of the Department of History at Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA.

Contact Info: Walter.Woodward@uconn.edu, <http://history.uconn.edu/faculty-by-name/walter-woodward>

Of special note: [State historian: CT's hardship after the Revolution provides lessons for today](#)



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Rachel Carley

Historian and Historic Preservation Consultant

Rachel Carley is an independent architectural historian, preservation consultant, lecturer, author and exhibition curator based in Litchfield. Her books include: *Litchfield: The Making of a New England Town*; *Building Greenwich: Architecture and Design, 1640 to the Present*; *A Visual Dictionary of American Domestic Architecture*; *Cabin Fever*; and *Cuba: Four Hundred Years of Architectural Heritage*. Her work has also appeared in *The New York Times*, *Architectural Record* and *Harvard Design Magazine*. Ms. Carley holds an M.S. in Historic Preservation from the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture and Planning. She is a frequent consultant to the Litchfield Historical Society.

Contact Info: rcarley@snet.net

Raechel Guest

Director, *Silas Bronson Library* in Waterbury

Raechel Guest is a graduate of the University of Delaware's Winterthur Program in Early American Culture. She was the Assistant Curator at the Mattatuck Museum in Waterbury for eight years, researching various aspects of local history for special exhibits, and Executive Director/Curator of the Cornwall Historical Society for five years. She became Director of the Silas Bronson Library in Waterbury in 2015. A Waterbury resident, Ms. Guest writes about the city's history for occasional publication and for her blog, [Waterbury Thoughts](#).

Contact Info: rguest@waterburyct.org

Catherine Keene Fields

Executive Director, *Litchfield Historical Society*

Ms. Fields has been director of the Litchfield Historical Society since 1987. Before coming to Litchfield, she was Director of the Passaic County Historical Society in Paterson, New Jersey for seven years. She holds a B.A. in American History from the College of William and Mary in Virginia, a M.A. in Cultural History/Museum Administration from the University of Vermont, and attended the Seminar for Historical Administration in Williamsburg. While in Paterson, she collaborated with other local organizations to develop joint exhibitions and programs including the award winning *Life and Times in Silk City*. During her tenure in Litchfield, Ms. Fields directed the renovation and re-interpretation of the Litchfield History Museum and the Tapping Reeve House and Litchfield Law School and she guided the society through accreditation by the American Association of Museums. She is a former member of the National Council of the American Association for State and Local History and has served on the boards of the Connecticut Humanities Council and the Connecticut League of History Organizations.

Contact Info: cfields@litchfieldhistoricalsociety.org



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Opportunities for further exploration and engagement

Connecticut Digital Archive

A wide-ranging online resource for historic photographs and archives.

<http://collections.ctdigitalarchive.org>

Connecticut Explored

A non-profit podcast and quarterly magazine devoted to exploring the state's cultural heritage. Log on and subscribe. <https://ctexplored.org>

Connecticut History.org

The Connecticut Humanities Council's online portal to stories about the people, traditions, innovations and events that make up our rich history. <https://connecticuthistory.org>

Connecticut History Day

A program for students grades 6-12 that encourages exploration of history. Visit for volunteer opportunities. <http://www.historydayct.org>

Connecticut History Illustrated

A fascinating digital archive of photographs and other resources related to Connecticut heritage and culture. <http://connecticuthistoryillustrated.org>

Connecticut League of History Organizations

Networking opportunities for historical societies and local museums. Check for events and workshops in your area. <http://clho.org>

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

The state's non-profit organization devoted to historic preservation. Provides programs, events, and advocacy. <http://cttrust.org>

Litchfield Historical Society and The Litchfield Ledger

Dedicated to collecting, preserving, and interpreting the history of Litchfield County. Among many remarkable online database projects is the Litchfield Ledger, which explores the stories of the Tapping Reeve Law School and the Litchfield Female Academy.

<http://www.litchfieldhistoricalsociety.org/>, <http://www.litchfieldhistoricalsociety.org/ledger/>

Mattatuck Museum

Waterbury's art and regional history museum. <https://www.mattmuseum.org/>

Silas Bronson Library

A multi-faceted institution that fosters ideas, promotes education, and contributes to the cultural heritage of Waterbury through programs and collections.

<http://www.bronsonlibrary.org/>