*Representative-at-Large Candidate*

**Name:** Patrick Ford

**Education:** Dominican University, River Forest, IL, MLIS, August 2008. Specialization: Special Collections and Archival Management. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI, MA, Art History, May 2004. Specialization: Architecture. Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI, BA, English, May 1999. Minors: Art History and History

**Employment (Relevant to Archives):** The Katharine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center, Old Saybrook, CT, Archives Consultant (2020); Southern New Hampshire University, Hooksett, NH, Adjunct Instructor, Fine Arts & Humanities (2016-present); Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, CT,  Special Collections Librarian (2018-2020); Maine Historical Society, Portland, ME, Photo Archivist/Curator (2017-2018), Project Archivist and Curatorial Associate (2014-2016); Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, Special Collections Cataloging Associate, Institute Archives and Special Collections (2013-2014), Vail Cataloging Associate, Institute Archives and Special Collections (2010-2013); Harvard University, Countway Library of Medicine, Boston, MA, Project Cataloger, Collections and Knowledge Management (2009-2011); David Zwirner, contemporary art gallery, New York, NY, Archivist (2008); Columbia University, Avery Architecture and Fine Arts Library, New York, NY, Graduate Practicum, Dept. of Archives and Drawings (2008); The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL; Archives Intern, Ryerson & Burnham Libraries (2008); DePaul University, Chicago, IL, Image Collection Assistant, Digital Collections (2008).

**Service to New England Archivists:** Program Committee Chair, New England Archivists, Fall 2019 Meeting, Maps & Legends, Portland, ME; Annual Meeting Program Committee, New England Archivists. Spring 2019 Meeting, Together We Can, Burlington, VT.

**Service to Archives Profession:** Secretary, [The Acorn Club](http://www.acornclubct.org/)*.* 2020-present; Peer Reviewer, Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), 2020-present; Program Coordinator, ARLIS/NA-New England, Fall 2019 Meeting; Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development (ACLPD), Connecticut State Library, 2018-present.

**Candidate Question: A brief candidate statement in response to "what do you consider to be one of the greatest challenges archivists in New England are facing at present, and what are potential paths NEA can take to address this issue?**

As someone directly affected by the first wave of job cuts due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I consider job insecurity and unemployment to be imminent and immediate challenges for archivists. The pandemic has left archival workers jobless, furloughed, working reduced hours or for reduced pay, without health insurance or childcare, and often struggling to meet the basic needs of life. By collecting data, monitoring trends, and disseminating relevant information, archivists can address job insecurity directly and at its root. As SAA’s Core Values of Archivists says, only through “building support and understanding all forms of archival labor” can we “secure the vital resources to continue our work and to ensure continued access to materials held within archives.”

As a collections professional and an NEA member, I am heartened to see NEA’s June 2020 statement regarding the SAA’s Archival Workers Emergency Fund as well as the 2018 statement on contingent employment. NEA has proven to be strategic and decisive in addressing job insecurity. Moving forward, NEA needs to remain vigilant in addressing and providing information regarding threats to job security in our field, as well as all notable efforts to address them. If it is not currently in place, I encourage NEA to set regular reviews, surveys and/or studies of contingency employment, layoffs/furlough/reduced hours, salary, and so forth in order to collect data and monitor trends. SAA created an excellent “short-term strategies” page that provides resources for individuals and institutions affected by the pandemic. As someone more attentive to NEA than SAA, I encourage NEA to pass along such links to members. However, I think the support we provide could be even more holistic. Like many NEA folks, I wear many professional hats—archivist, librarian, educator, and a museum professional. As such, I am an advocate for inquiry and collaboration across the collections fields to consider a diverse range of methods of addressing our shared needs. We must look to allied fields’ approaches to addressing job insecurity writ large as well as how it directly relates to the current pandemic situation. For example, the American Association of Museums’ Center for the Future of Museums, has shared “basic needs” resources for laid off/furloughed/reduced hours/contingency workers including links for legal advice, understanding unemployment benefits, and even psychological health. Perhaps NEA could be a similar nexus point for helping archivists particularly through these tough times.

Financial training is another method of addressing job insecurity at its core. We need to be strong, articulate advocates for ourselves and/or our departments in the face of financial upheaval. In order to face inevitable financial dilemmas with confidence and finesse, I encourage NEA to advocate for finance education for archivists, including “basic finance needs” resources as well as passing along info regarding SAA’s courses in finance and crisis finance, as well as those offered by allied organizations.

Through strong and collaborative networks of communication, archivists can help fellow archivists—and embody the SAA Core Values—by directly and holistically addressing job insecurity and its repercussions.