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Migrations, Immigrations, and Journeys Over 250 Years: Illinois Lands and People

Abstract Description:

This roundtable brings together experts in the fields of Indigenous history and tribal relations, African American history and migration, the lesser-known history of Irish farm settlements and migration to Illinois, and recent immigration groups, settlements, and trends in Illinois. The roundtable seeks to elevate and honor the diverse migrations, immigrations, and journeys across the state for over 250 years, highlighting the storied lands of Illinois for native settlement and ancestral wisdom as well as the rich farming history, cultivation, and longtime communities in the state. The hope is that attendees will resonate with stories shared by the panelists, contribute their own, and leave with a deeper understanding of how residents of Illinois are connected by a deep shared history through land and lineage.

Caroline M. Kiesel, Ph.D. (moderator)

Associate Professor, DePaul University; Illinois Humanities Road Scholar; ISHS Advisory Board Member

Dr. Caroline M. Kiesel is an associate professor at DePaul University, an Illinois Humanities Road Scholar, and she serves on the Advisory Board of the Illinois State Historical Society (ISHS). She has been an educator working in higher education for over 30 years who previously worked in the field of immigration law for 9 years, advocating for immigrants across Chicagoland in a variety of legal cases, including deportation defense. Dr. Kiesel's current work involves research, writing, teaching, and presenting about race, exclusion, slavery, abolition, and free Blacks in early Illinois history. She is currently writing a book on the role of Albion, Illinois in the struggle to keep Illinois slavery-free in the early years of statehood and co-authoring a book with Dr. Brian Miller (Wheaton College) on race and property in Illinois history (under contract with University of Illinois Press).

Logan Pappenfort (panelist)

Director of Tribal Relations at Illinois State Museum; ISHS Board Member

Logan Pappenfort is the Director of Tribal Relations for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. He is descended from tawaahkwahkinanka (Trail of the Storms), a hereditary chief of the Piankashaw, who are represented by the Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma today. Logan has a keen interest in the history of Illinois and its people. He believes that it is his responsibility as an individual of native descent to tell the narratives and perspectives which have often been neglected. Logan received a Bachelor of Science in Anthropology from Kansas State University and served for six years as Director of Cultural Preservation at the Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma, in which he worked with various institutions across the Peoria Nation's ancestral lands. In addition to his role within the cultural preservation department, he also served 4 years on the Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma's Business Committee as Second Chief and helped to coordinate the Peoria Annual Powwow from 2015-2021.

Brian Mitchell, Ph.D. (panelist)

Center for Lincoln Studies Public Humanities Fellow; Professor, UIS History Department; Author and Public Historian; ISHS Board Member

Dr. Brian Mitchell is a noted scholar of U.S. History and is currently a research professor at the University of Illinois-Springfield. Mitchell taught African American and Public History at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock for fifteen years before relocating to Springfield, Illinois. The author of several books, book chapters, and papers, Mitchell's most recent book, *Monumental: Oscar Dunn and His Radical Fight in Reconstruction Louisiana* (Brian K. Mitchell, Barrington S. Edwards, and Nick Weldon, The Historic New Orleans Collection, 2021) was the winner of several prestigious book awards, including the Phillis Wheatley Book Award, the American Association of State and Local History's (AASLH) Excellence Award, and was a finalist for the Organization of American Historians' Best Civil War and Reconstruction Book Award.

Greg Koos (panelist)

Executive Director Emeritus, McLean County Museum of History; ISHS Treasurer; Author/Forthcoming Book – *Greening of the Prairie: Irish Farm Settlement in the Corn Belt* (University of Illinois Press)

Greg Koos is the Executive Director Emeritus of the nationally accredited McLean County Museum of History in Bloomington, Illinois. His published works include: studies on the

material culture of American buildings; articles on museum and community relations; and a new history of nineteenth-century McLean County. His studies on Irish immigration into the Midwest have appeared in *New Hibernia Review* and the *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*. His newest book, *Greening of the Prairie: Irish Farm Settlement in the Corn Belt* is being published by the University of Illinois Press. He was recognized for his work in Illinois history when he received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Illinois State Historical Society in 2023.

Diego Bonesatti (panelist)

Legal Services Program Manager at Michigan United (based in Springfield, Illinois); Immigrant Advocate and Legal Counselor for 30+ years (working with immigrants across the Midwest)

Diego Bonesatti has spent his entire career working with immigrants throughout various states in the Midwest, including Illinois. Currently, he is the legal services program manager at Michigan United a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, where he is federally licensed and runs the legal services program and citizenship classes. The legal services program assists families renewing Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and related legal processes as well as assisting legal residents apply for naturalization, derivation for qualifying children, and citizenship acquired at birth abroad. The citizenship classes dovetail with legal residents seeking naturalization. In addition, he is involved in training volunteers and legal services staff of other organizations. He will be speaking as part of Michigan United Action, a (c)(4) sister organization.